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THE WORKS

OF

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

VOL. X.

A Spencer

A Spencer.

GOLDEN MEDAL

Presented to Benjamin Franklin

BY THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF LONDON

1753.

THE WORKS OF

Benjamin Franklin

CONTAINING SEVERAL POLITICAL AND HISTORICAL TRACTS NOT INCLUDED IN ANY FORMER EDITION, AND MANY LETTERS OFFICIAL AND PRIVATE NOT HITHERTO PUBLISHED

WITH NOTES AND A LIFE OF THE AUTHOR

BY JARED SPARKS

VOLUME X.

CHICAGO:
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OF

VOLUME TENTH.

CORRESPONDENCE.

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CORRESPONDENCE,

PART THIRD;

COMPRISING

LETTERS PRIVATE AND OFFICIAL

FROM

THE BEGINNING OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

TO

THE END OF THE AUTHOR'S MISSION TO FRANCE.

1775—1785.

(CONTINUED.)

CORRESPONDENCE.

TO CHARLES J. FOX.

Passy, 5 September, 1783

Sir,

I received in its time the letter you did me the honor of writing to me by Mr. Hartley; and I cannot let him depart without expressing my satisfaction in his conduct towards us, and applauding the prudence of that choice, which sent us a man possessed of such a spirit of conciliation, and of all that frankness, sincerity, and candor, which naturally produce confidence, and thereby facilitate the most difficult negotiations. Our countries are now happily at peace, on which I congratulate you most cordially; and I beg you to be assured, that as long as I have any concern in public affairs, I shall readily and heartily concur with you in promoting every measure that may tend to promote the common felicity. With great and sincere esteem and respect, I have the honor to be, &c.

B. Franklin.

TO DAVID HARTLEY.

Mr. Fox. — American People.

Passy, 6 September, 1783.

My dear Friend,

Enclosed is my letter to Mr. Fox. I beg you would assure him, that my expressions of esteem for him are

not mere professions. I really think him a *great* man, and I should not think so, if I did not believe he was at bottom, and would prove himself a *good* one. Guard him against mistaken notions of the American people. You have deceived yourselves too long with vain expectations of reaping advantage from our little discontents. We are more thoroughly an enlightened people, with respect to our political interests, than perhaps any other under heaven. Every man among us reads, and is so easy in his circumstances as to have leisure for conversations of improvement, and for acquiring information. Our domestic misunderstandings, when we have them, are of small extent, though monstrously magnified by your microscopic newspapers. He who judges from them, that we are on the point of falling into anarchy, or returning to the obedience of Britain, is like one who, being shown some spots in the sun, should fancy, that the whole disk would soon be overspread with them, and that there would be an end of daylight. The great body of intelligence among our people, surrounds and overpowers our petty dissensions, as the sun's great mass of fire diminishes and destroys his spots. Do not, therefore, any longer delay the evacuation of New York, in the vain hope of a new revolution in your favor, if such a hope has indeed had any effect in occasioning the delay. It is now nine months since the evacuations were promised. You expect with reason, that the people of New York should do your merchants justice in the payment of their old debts; consider the injustice you do them in keeping them so long out of their habitations, and out of their business, by which they might have been enabled to make payment.

There is no truth more clear to me than this, that the great interest of our two countries is a thorough

reconciliation. Restraints on the freedom of commerce and intercourse between us, can afford no advantage equivalent to the mischief they will do, by keeping up ill humor, and promoting a total alienation. Let you and me, my dear friend, do our best towards advancing and securing that reconciliation. We can do nothing, that will in a dying hour afford us more solid satisfaction.

I wish you a prosperous journey, and a happy sight of your friends. Present my best respects to your good brother and sister, and believe me ever, with sincere and great esteem yours affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO MRS. MARY HEWSON.

On the future Establishment of her Children.

Passy, 7 September, 1783

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I received your kind letter of the 9th past. I am glad, that the little books are pleasing to you and your children, and that the children improve by them.

My grandson Bache has been four years at school at Geneva, and is but lately come home to me here. I find reason to be satisfied with the improvement he has made in his learning. He translates common Latin readily into French, but his English has suffered for want of use; though I think he would readily recover it, if he were awhile at your school at Cheam, and at the same time be going on with his Latin and Greek. You were once so kind as to offer to take him under your care; would that be still convenient to you? He is docile and of gentle manners, ready to receive and follow good advice, and will set no bad example to

your *other* children. He gains every day upon my affections.

I long much to see you and yours, and my other friends in England, but I have not yet determined on the journey. Our definitive treaty of peace being now signed, I have indeed less to confine me here, and might make a short excursion without much inconvenience; but short days and winter are coming on, and I think I can hardly undertake such an expedition before the spring of next year.

With regard to the future establishment of your children, which you say you want to consult me about, I am still of opinion, that America will afford you more chances of doing it well than England. All the means of good education are plenty there, the general manners are simple and pure, temptations to vice and folly fewer, the profits of industry in business as great and sure as in England: and there is one advantage more, which your command of money will give you there, I mean the laying out a part of your fortune in new land, now to be had extremely cheap; but which must be increased immensely in value, before your children come of age, by the rapid population of the country. If you should arrive there while I live, you know you may depend on every assistance in my power to afford you, and I think my children will have a pleasure too in serving their father's friend. I do not offer it as a motive, that you will be much esteemed and respected there; for that you are, and must be, everywhere: but give me leave to flatter myself, that my being made happier in my last years by your neighbourhood and society may be some inducement to you.

I forwarded your letter to Mr. Williams. Temple is always with me, being my secretary. He presents his respects to you. I have been lately ill with a fit

of the gout, if that may indeed be called a disease. I rather suspect it to be a remedy, since I always find my health and vigor of mind improved after the fit is over. I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. You say you are a little afraid that our country is spoiled. Parts of it have indeed suffered by the war, those situated near the sea; but the body of the country has not been much hurt, and the fertility of our soil, with the industry of our people, now that the commerce of all the world is open to us, will soon repair the damages received, and introduce that prosperity, which we hope Providence intends for us, since it has so remarkably favored our Revolution.

TO DAVID HARTLEY.

Passy, 7 September, 1783.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Enclosed I send you an extract of a letter to me from the President of Congress, in which you will observe the moderate disposition of that body towards the loyalists, with the causes of aggravation in the people's resentments against them. I am always invariably yours most sincerely, B. FRANKLIN.

TO JOHN JAY.

Quotes a Letter from America containing false Reports. — Appeals to Mr. Jay to refute them.

Passy, 10 September, 1783.

Sir,

I have received a letter from a very respectable person in America, containing the following words, viz.

"It is confidently reported, propagated, and believed by some among us, that the Court of France was at the bottom against our obtaining the fishery and territory in that great extent, in which both are secured to us by the treaty; that our minister at that court favored, or did not oppose, this design against us; and that it was entirely owing to the firmness, sagacity, and disinterestedness of Mr. Adams, with whom Mr. Jay united, that we have obtained these important advantages." *

* This extract is from a letter written by Dr. Cooper of Boston, and dated May 5th, 1783. In a preceding paragraph, Dr. Cooper says; "There is a party among us disposed to avail themselves of every incident, and of all personal resentments, to weaken and divide our public counsels, and injure the alliance. Regard to the general good, as well as private and the most constant friendship, oblige me to state things as they are." Then comes the extract in the text. Dr. Cooper adds; "It has also been said, from the same quarter, that the court of France secretly traversed Mr. Adams's views in Holland for obtaining from the United Provinces an acknowledgment of our independence; and that the same part has been acted in Spain and Russia. All these things are incredible to me; and, though they make some impression at present, truth is great and will prevail. Care, I hope, will be taken both at Congress and in Europe, as far as public prudence will permit, to state, as soon as may be, these matters in a just light, and to prevent the public mischiefs, as well as private injuries, that may arise from misapprehensions in matters of this moment."

A copy of the whole of this letter was sent by Dr. Franklin to Count de Vergennes, and it is now contained among the American papers in the *Archives des Affaires Etrangères* at Paris. Dr. Franklin likewise sent to Congress a copy of his correspondence with Messrs. Jay and

It is not my purpose to dispute any share of the honor of that treaty, which the friends of my colleagues may be disposed to give them; but, having now spent fifty years of my life in public offices and trusts, and having still one ambition left, that of carrying the character of fidelity at least to the grave with me, I cannot allow that I was behind any of them in zeal and faithfulness. I therefore think, that I ought not to suffer an accusation, which falls little short of treason to my country, to pass without notice, when the means of effectual vindication are at hand. You, Sir, were a witness of my conduct in that affair. To you and my other colleagues I appeal, by sending to each a similar letter with this, and I have no doubt of your readiness to do a brother Commissioner justice, by certificates that will entirely destroy the effect of that accusation. I have the honor to be, with much esteem, &c.* B. FRANKLIN.

Adams on this subject. M. de la Luzerne, in writing to Count de Vergennes some months afterwards, said, "Dr. Franklin has at last aroused himself from the apathy with which till now he seems to have regarded the attacks of his colleagues. He has sent to Congress the copy of the letter, which he had written to Mr. Jay and Mr. Adams, requesting these two ministers to explain themselves respecting a report, which had gone abroad, that he did not unite in procuring for the United States admission to the fisheries, and that he was disposed to conclude a treaty of peace without securing this advantage to the eastern States. Mr. Jay, in his letter to Dr. Franklin, renders full justice to him on this point, and affirms in a positive manner, that he concurred with a zeal equal to his intelligence and experience in all the articles of the peace.' — *Philadelphia, December 1st, 1783. MS. Letter.*

A copy of the correspondence was likewise transmitted to Dr. Cooper; but it is doubtful whether it reached him in such season, as to enable him to use it for the purpose of correcting the erroneous impression that had been made in Massachusetts. Dr. Cooper died on the 29th of December, 1783.

* A copy of the same letter was sent to Mr. Adams.

FROM JOHN JAY TO B. FRANKLIN.

Refutes the Charges contained in a Letter to Dr. Franklin, respecting the Part taken by the latter in Regard to the Fisheries.

Passy, 11 September, 1783.

SIR,

I have been favored with your letter of yesterday, and will answer it explicitly. I have no reason whatever to believe, that you were averse to our obtaining the full extent of boundary and fishery secured to us by the treaty. Your conduct respecting them throughout the negotiation indicated a strong, a steady attachment to both those objects, and, in my opinion, promoted the attainment of them.

I remember, that, in a conversation, which M. de Rayneval, the first Secretary of Count de Vergennes, had with you and me, in the summer of 1782, you contended for our full right to the fishery, and argued it on various principles.

Your letters to me, when in Spain, considered our territory as extending to the Mississippi. and expressed your opinion against ceding the navigation of that river, in very strong nd pointed terms.

In short, Sir, I do not recollect the least difference in sentiment between us respecting the boundaries or fisheries. On the contrary, we were unanimous and united in adhering to and insisting on them. Nor did I perceive the least disposition in either of us to recede from our claims, or be satisfied with less than we obtained. I have the honor to be, with great respect and esteem, &c.

JOHN JAY.

TO JOSIAH QUINCY.

Treaty of Peace.— Depreciating Currency. — False Charges of his Enemies.

Passy, 11 September, 1783

My dear Friend,

Mr. Storer told me, not long since, that you complained of my not writing to you. You had reason, for I find among your letters to me two unanswered. The truth is, I have had too much business to do for the public, and too little help allowed me, so that it became impossible for me to keep up my private correspondences. I promised myself more leisure when the definitive treaty of peace should be concluded. But that it seems is to be followed by a treaty of commerce, which will probably take up a good deal of time, and require much attention. I seize this little interim to sit down and have a little chat with my friends in America.

I lament with you the many mischiefs, the injustice, the corruption of manners, &c., that attended a depreciating currency. It is some consolation to me, that I washed my hands of that evil by predicting it in Congress, and proposing means, that would have been effectual to prevent it, if they had been adopted. Subsequent operations, that I have executed, demonstrate that my plan was practicable; but it was unfortunately rejected. Considering all our mistakes and mismanagements, it is wonderful we have finished our affairs so well, and so soon. Indeed, I am wrong in using that expression, "*we* have finished our affairs so well." Our blunders have been many, and they serve to manifest the hand of Providence more clearly in our favor; so that we may much more properly say,

"These are *thy* doings, O Lord, and they are marvellous in our eyes."

Mr. Storer, whom you recommended to me, is now in England. He needed none of the advice you desired me to give him. His behaviour here was unexceptionable, and he gained the esteem of all that knew him.

The epitaph on my dear and much esteemed young friend,* is too well written to be capable of improvement by any corrections of mine. Your moderation appears in it, since the natural affection of a parent has not induced you to exaggerate his virtues. I shall always mourn his loss with you, a loss not easily made up to his country.

How differently constituted was his noble and generous mind from that of the miserable calumniators you mention. Having plenty of merit in himself, he was not jealous of the appearance of merit in others, but did justice to their characters with as much pleasure as these people do injury. It is now near two years since your friendship induced you to acquaint me with some of their accusations. I guessed easily at the quarter from whence they came; but, conscious of my innocence, and unwilling to disturb public operations by private resentment or contentions, I passed them over in silence; and I have not, till within these few days, taken the least step towards my vindication. Informed that the practice of abusing me continues, and that some heavy charges are lately made against me, respecting my conduct in the treaty, written from Paris and propagated among you, I have demanded of all my colleagues that they do me justice, and I have no doubt of receiving it from each of

* Josiah Quincy, Junior.

them. I did not think it necessary to justify myself to you, by answering the calumnies you mentioned. I knew you did not believe them.

It was improbable, that I should at this distance combine with anybody to urge the redemption of the paper on those unjust terms, having no interest in such redemption. It was impossible, that I should have traded with the public money, since I had not traded with any money, either separately or jointly with any other person, directly or indirectly, to the value of a shilling since my being in France. And the fishery, which it was said I had relinquished, had not then come in question, nor had I ever dropped a syllable to that purpose in word or writing; but was always firm in this principle, that, having had a common right with the English to the fisheries while connected with that nation, and having contributed equally with our blood and treasure in conquering what had been gained from the French, we had an undoubted right, in breaking up our partnership, to a fair division. As to the two charges of age and weakness, I must confess the first, but I am not quite so clear in the latter; and perhaps my adversaries may find that they presumed a little too much upon it, when they ventured to attack me.

But enough of these petty personalities. I quit them to rejoice with you, in the *peace* God has blest us with, and in the prosperity it gives us a prospect of. The definitive treaty was signed the 3d instant. We are now friends with England and with all mankind. May we never see another war, for in my opinion *there never was a good war, or a bad peace.* Adieu, and believe me ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. Franklin

FROM JOHN ADAMS TO B. FRANKLIN.

Paris, 13 September, 1783.

SIR,

I have received the letter, which you did me the honor to write to me on the 10th of this month, in which you say you have received a letter from a very respectable person in America, containing the following words, viz. "It is confidently reported, propagated, and believed by some among us, that the court of France was at the bottom against our obtaining the fishery and territory in that great extent, in which both are secured to us by the treaty; that our minister at that court favored, or did not oppose this design against us, and that it was entirely owing to the firmness, sagacity, and disinterestedness of Mr. Adams, with whom Mr. Jay united, that we have obtained those important advantages."

It is unnecessary for me to say any thing upon this subject, more than to quote the words which I wrote in the evening of the 30th of November, 1782, and which have been received and read in Congress, viz. "As soon as I arrived in Paris, I waited on Mr. Jay, and learned from him the rise and progress of the negotiation. Nothing that has happened, since the beginning of the controversy in 1761, has ever struck me more forcibly or affected me more intimately, than that entire coincidence of principles and opinion between him and me. In about three days I went out to Passy, and spent the evening with Dr Franklin, and entered largely into conversation with him upon the course and present state of our foreign affairs. I told him my opinion without reserve of the policy of this court, and of the principles, wisdom, and firmness with which Mr. Jay had conducted the negotiation in

his sickness and my absence, and that I was determined to support Mr. Jay to the utmost of my power in pursuit of the same system. The Doctor heard me patiently and said nothing."

"The first conference we had afterwards with Mr. Oswald in considering one point and another, Dr. Franklin turned to Mr. Jay and said, 'I am of your opinion, and will go on with these gentlemen without consulting this court.' He has accordingly met us in most of our conferences, and has gone on with us in entire harmony and unanimity throughout, and has been able and useful, both by his sagacity and reputation, in the whole negotiation." * I have the honor to be, very respectfully, Sir,

JOHN ADAMS.

FROM SIR JOSEPH BANKS TO B. FRANKLIN.

Balloons.

Soho Square, 13 September, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

The having it in my power to answer with precision the numerous questions, which are asked me by all sorts of people concerning the aërostatic experiment, which, such as they may be, are suggested by every newspaper now printed here, and considered as a part of my duty to answer, is an obligation for which I am indebted to you, and an obligation of no small extent. I lament that the vacation of the Royal Society will not permit me to lay your paper before them as a body

* For further information on this subject, and particularly for an account of the part taken by Dr. Franklin in the negotiation before he was joined by Mr. Jay and Mr. Adams, see the *North American Review*, for January, 1830, pp. 15 *et seq.*

immediately; but it shall be the first thing they see when we meet again, as the conciseness and intelligence, with which it is drawn up, preclude the hopes of any thing more satisfactory being received.

Most agreeable are the hopes you give me of continuing to communicate on this most interesting subject. I consider the present day, which has opened a road into the air, as an epoch, from whence a rapid increase of the stock of human knowledge must take its date; and that it will have an immediate effect upon the concerns of mankind, greater than any thing since the invention of shipping, which opened our way upon the face of the water from land to land. If the rough effort, which has been made, admits of the improvement that other sciences have received, we shall see it used as a counterpoise to absolute gravity, and a broad-wheeled waggon travelling with two only, instead of eight horses, the breed of that rival animal in course being diminished, and the human species increased in proportion.

I have thought, as soon as I return from my present banishment, of constructing one and sending it up for the purpose of an electrical kite, a use to which it seems particularly adapted. Be pleased to direct your favors to Soho Square; they are sent to me without delay wherever I am. Believe me, your obliged, &c.

JOSEPH BANKS.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Relations with Morocco. — Portugal. — English Ministers.

Passy, 13 September, 1785

SIR,

I received, a few days since, the private letter your Excellency did me the honor of writing to me of the 13th of June. I regret with you the resignation of the late Secretary. Your present cares are increased by it, and it will be difficult to find a successor of equal abilities.

We found no difficulty in deciphering the resolution of Congress. The Commissioners have taken no notice of it in our public letter.

I am happy to hear that both the device and workmanship of the medal are approved with you, as they have the good fortune to be by the best judges on this side of the water. It has been esteemed a well-timed, as well as a well-merited, compliment here, and has its good effects. Since the two first which you mention as received, I have sent by different opportunities so many, as that every member of Congress might have one. I hope they are come safe to hand by this time. I wrote a long letter to Mr. Livingston by Mr. Barney, to which I beg leave to refer, enclosing a copy.

We had, before signing the definitive treaty, received the ratification of the preliminary articles by his Britannic Majesty, exchanged with us by Mr. Hartley for that of the Congress. I send herewith a copy of the first and last clauses.

In a former letter, I mentioned the volunteer proceedings of a merchant at Alicant, towards obtaining

a treaty between us and the Emperor of Morocco. We have since received a letter from a person who says, as you will see by the copy enclosed, that he is sent by the Emperor to be the bearer of his answer to the United States, and that he is arrived in Spain on his way to Paris. He has not yet appeared here, and we hardly know what answer to give him. I hope the sending a minister to that court, as recommended in my last, has been taken into consideration, or at least that some instructions respecting that nation have been sent to your minister in Spain, who is better situated than we are for such a negotiation.

The minister from Denmark often speaks to me about the proposed treaty, of which a copy went by Mr. Barney. No commission to sign it, nor any instructions from Congress relating to it, are yet arrived; and, though pressed, I have not ventured to do any thing further in the affair.

I forward herewith a letter to the Congress from the city of Hamburg.* I understand that a good disposition towards us prevails there, which it may be well to encourage.

No answer has yet been given me from the court of Portugal, respecting the plan of a treaty concerted between its ambassador here and me. He has been unwell and much in the country, so that I have not seen him lately. I suspect that the false or exaggerated reports of the distracted situation of our government, industriously propagated throughout Europe by our enemies, have made an impression in that kingdom to our disadvantage, and inclined them to hesitate in forming a connexion with us. Questions asked me, and observations made by several of the foreign

* See *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. IV. p. 88.

ministers here, convince me, that the idle stories of our disunion, contempt of authority, refusal to pay taxes, &c.; have been too much credited, and been very injurious to our reputation.

I sent before a copy of the letter I wrote to the Grand Master of Malta,* with a present of our medal. With this you will have a copy of his answer. I send also a copy of a note I received from the Pope's Nuncio.† He is very civil on all occasions, and has mentioned the possibility of an advantageous trade America might have with the Ecclesiastical State, which he says has two good ports, Civita Vecchia and ———.

This court continues favorable to us. Count de Vergennes was resolute in refusing to sign the definitive treaty with England before ours was signed. The English ministers were offended, but complied. I am convinced that court will never cease endeavouring to disunite us. We shall, I hope, be constantly on our guard against those machinations; for our safety consists in a steady adherence to our friends, and our reputation in a faithful regard to treaties, and in a grateful conduct towards our benefactors.

I send herewith sundry memorials recommended to my care by Count de Vergennes, viz. one respecting a claim of Messieurs Fosters, of Bordeaux, one of M. Pequet, and one of M. Bayard. The Congress will take such notice of them as they shall think proper. With great esteem and respect, I have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

* See Vol. IX. pp. 508, 527. † Ibid. p. 548.

FROM DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

Concerning a Treaty of Commerce with England.

Bath, 24 September, 1783.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I am at present at Bath, with my dearest sister, whom I have found as well as I could have expected, and I hope with reasonable prospect of recovery in time. I have seen my friends in the ministry, and hope things will go on well; with them I am sure all is right and firm. The chief part of the cabinet min isters are out of town; but there will be a full cabinet held in a few days, in which a specific proposition, in the nature of a temporary convention, will be given in instructions to me, I imagine nearly upon the ground of my memorial of May 19th, 1783, which I delivered to the American ministers, viz. "American ships not to bring foreign manufactures into Great Britain, nor to trade directly between the British West Indies and Great Britain;" all the rest to be as before the war. I expect that something to this effect will be their determination in the affair; and, if it should be so, I shall hope not to meet with difficulty on your parts. I want to see some specific beginning. As to any further proposition respecting the trade between Great Britain and the British West Indies, I doubt whether any such can be discussed before the meeting of Parliament. I wish to look forward not only to the continuation of peace between our two countries, but to the improvement of reconciliation into alliance; and therefore I wish the two parties to be disposed to accommodate each other, without the strict account by weights and scales, as between aliens and strangers, actuated towards each other by no other principle than

cold and equalizing indifference. Friendly dispositions presumed have their fairest chance of being realized; but, if we should set out presuming against them, the good which might have happened may be prevented. Pray remember me to your three colleagues, and to all friends. Yours ever most affectionately,

D. HARTLEY.

P. S. I have put in a word for our Quaker article, and I hope with some impression.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Enclosing a Copy of the Definitive Treaty.

Passy, 27 September, 1783.

SIR,

Mr. Thaxter, late secretary of Mr. Adams, who is charged with all our despatches, that were intended to go by the French packet boat, writes from L'Orient, that, though he arrived there two days before the time appointed for her sailing, he missed reaching her by four hours; but another light vessel was fitting, and would sail the 21st instant, in which he hoped to arrive at New York nearly as soon as the packet. We shall send duplicates by the next from hence.

In the mean time I enclose a printed copy of the definitive treaty, which I hear is ratified. Indeed, we have the ratification of the preliminaries.

Mr. Hartley, when he left us, expected to return in three weeks, in order to proceed with us in forming a treaty of commerce. The new commission, that was intended for us, is not yet come to hand. With great respect, I have the honor to be, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN

TO SIR EDWARD NEWENHAM.

Dungannon Resolutions. — Trade between Ireland and America.

Passy, 2 October, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

I have just received your very kind letter of the 16th past. I rejoice sincerely to hear of your safe return to your own country, family, and friends, and of the success of your election.

It is a pleasing reflection, arising from the contemplation of our successful struggle, and the manly, spirited, and unanimous resolves at Dungannon, that liberty, which some years since appeared in danger of extinction, is now regaining the ground she had lost, that arbitrary governments are likely to become more mild and reasonable, and to expire by degrees, giving place to more equitable forms; one of the effects this of the art of printing, which diffuses so general a light, augmenting with the growing day, and of so penetrating a nature, that all the window-shutters, which despotism and priestcraft can oppose to keep it out, prove insufficient.

In answer to your question, respecting what may be necessary to fix a trade between Ireland and America, I may acquaint you between ourselves, that there is some truth in the report you may have heard, of our desiring to know of Mr. Hartley whether he was empowered or instructed to include Ireland in the treaty of commerce proposed to us, and of his sending for instructions on that head, which never arrived. That treaty is yet open, may possibly be soon resumed; and it seems proper, that something should be contained in it to prevent the doubts and misunder-

standings that may hereafter arise on the subject, and secure to Ireland the same advantages in trade that England may obtain. You can best judge whether some law or resolution of your Parliament may not be of use towards gaining that point.

My grandson joins with me in wishes of every kind of felicity for you, Lady Newenham, and all your amiable family. God bless you, and give success to your constant endeavours for the welfare of your country. With true and great respect and esteem, I have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO THOMAS BRAND HOLLIS.

Eulogium of Thomas Hollis.

Passy, 5 October 1782

SIR,

I received but lately (though sent in June) your most valuable present of the *Memoirs of Thomas Hollis*, who was truly, as you describe him in your letter, "a good citizen of the world, and a faithful friend of America." America, too, is extremely sensible of his benevolence and great beneficence towards her, and will ever revere his memory. These volumes are a proof of what I have sometimes had occasion to say, in encouraging people to undertake difficult public services, that it is prodigious the quantity of good that may be done by one man, *if he will make a business of it*. It is equally surprising to think of the very little that is done by many; for, such is the general frivolity of employments and amusements of the rank we call *gentlemen*, that every century may have seen

three successions of a set of a thousand each, in every kingdom of Europe, (gentlemen too, of equal or superior fortune,) no one of which sets, in the course of their lives, has done the good effected by this man alone! Good, not only to his own nation, and to his contemporaries, but to distant countries, and to late posterity; for such must be the effect of his multiplying and distributing copies of the works of our best English writers, on subjects the most important to the welfare of society.

I knew him personally but little. I sometimes met with him at the Royal Society and the Society of Arts; but he appeared shy of my acquaintance, though he often sent me valuable presents, such as Hamilton's Works,* Sidney's Works, &c., which are now among the most precious ornaments of my library. We might possibly, if we had been more intimate, have concerted some useful operations together; but he loved to do his good alone and secretly; and I find besides, in perusing these Memoirs, that I was a doubtful character with him. I do not respect him less for his error; and I am obliged to the editors for the justice they have done me. They have made a little mistake in page 400, where a letter, which appeared in a London paper, January 7th, 1768, is said to have been written by Mr. Adams. It was written by me, and is reprinted in Mr. Vaughan's Collection of my Political Pieces, p. 231. This erratum is of no great importance, but may be corrected in a future edition.

I see Mr. Hollis had a collection of curious medals.

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* There is here probably a fault of memory in regard to the name of the author; or perhaps an error of the press The work alluded to may have been "Toland's Life of Milton," an elegant edition of which was published by Thomas Hollis.

If he had been still living, I should certainly have sent him one of the medals that I have caused to be struck here. I think the countenance of my *Liberty* would have pleased him. I suppose you possess the collection, and have the same taste. I beg you therefore to accept of one of these medals as a mark of my respect, and believe me to be, with sincere esteem, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM THE COUNT DE BRUHL TO B. FRANKLIN.*

Petworth, 10 October, 1783.

SIR,

I was very much flattered with the letter I had the pleasure to receive from your Excellency by means of the ingenious M. de Kempel's arrival in this country.† The favorable opinion you entertain of his tal-

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* Count de Bruhl was the minister of the Elector of Saxony to the court of Great Britain.

† Kempel, the celebrated inventor of the *Automaton Chess-player*, was introduced to Dr. Franklin by letters from Vienna. M. Valltravers wrote to him; "The occasion of this letter is furnished me by a very ingenious gentleman, M. Kempel, counsellor of his Imperial Majesty's finances for the kingdom of Hungary, who, on a furlough obtained for two years, is ready to set out for Paris, Brussels, and England, attended by his whole family, his lady, two sons, and two daughters; not only to satisfy his own curiosity but also in a great measure that of the public. Endowed with a peculiar taste and genius for mechanical inventions and improvements, for which he sees no manner of encouragement in these parts, he means to impart several of his most important discoveries and experiments wherever they shall be best received and rewarded. As an amusing specimen of his skill in mechanics, and as a means at the same time of supporting his travelling charges, he intends to exhibit the figure of a Turk playing at chess with any player; and answering, by pointing at the letters of an alphabet, any question made to him. I saw him play twice without discovering his intelligent director anywhere in or about him. If there were nothing but the organization of his arm, hand, and fingers, besides the motions of his head, that alone would entitle him to no small admiration.

"Besides his chess-player M. Kempel has amused himself with form-

ents is alone sufficient to convince me of their extent and usefulness. I cannot find words to express the gratitude I feel for the honor of your remembrance. I shall, therefore, only beg leave to assure you, that it will be the pride of my life to have been noticed by one of the most distinguished characters of the age, and I shall endeavour, upon all occasions, to contribute my small mite of admiration to the universal applause, which your eminent qualities, as a philosopher and a politician, are so well entitled to. I have the honor to be, with great respect, Sir, &c.

THE COUNT DE BRUHL.

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ing the figure of a child, uttering the first articulate sounds of elocution. Of these I have heard it pronounce distinctly upwards of thirty words and phrases. There remain but five or six letters of the alphabet, the expression of which he intends to complete at Paris."—*Vienna December 24th, 1782.*

Chess was a favorite amusement with Dr. Franklin, and one of his best papers is written on that subject. See Vol. II, p. 187. He was pleased with the performance of the automaton. In a short letter, soon after his arrival in Paris, M Kempel said to him: "If I have not, immediately on my return from Versailles, renewed my request, that you will be present at a representation of my automaton chess-player, it was only to gain a few days in which I might make some progress in another very interesting machine, upon which I have been employed, and which I wish you to see at the same time." This machine was probably the speaking figure mentioned by Mr. Valltravers.

The inventor's name occurs with a various orthography, as *Kempelen, Kemple, Kempl,* but his autograph is *Kempel.*

FROM SAMUEL COOPER TO B. FRANKLIN.

Impost of Five per Cent agreed to by the Legislature of Massachusetts.

Boston, 16 October, 1783.

SIR,

The consul general of France kindly informing me, that a vessel was on the point of sailing for Brest, I have only a moment to inform you, that the House of Representatives for this State have this moment passed an act for a duty of five per cent, on all goods imported, for paying the interest of our national debt, according to the requisition of Congress. This measure has met with uncommon opposition here. Congress having voted to the officers of the army five years' whole pay after the war, instead of half-pay for life, a great popular disgust took place in the New England States. At the beginning of the present session of the General Court, a great majority of the Lower House were warmly determined against granting the impost to Congress, knowing that part of it would be applied to the payment of the officers. Near forty towns in this State had expressly instructed their representatives against such an impost. The Senate, however, judging more wisely, were almost unanimous in favor of it. Both Houses remained firm in their opinion, and it was concluded nothing could be done on this business, at least in the present session.

At this juncture, the Governor, who had before, in his speech to both Houses at the meeting of the Court, endeavoured to impress them with the importance of supporting public credit, made a second address to them, of the same import. It produced a conference between both Houses, and the effect of all has been a decision in the House of Representa-

tives in favor of the impost. The Senate will no doubt concur, and the Governor will give his consent immediately. The struggle has been hard; seventy-five against sixty-eight. I hope the other States will come into the same measure, and lay a foundation for the support of our national credit.

We have yet no account of the conclusion of the definitive treaty. The vessel waiting for this letter, I have only time to subscribe myself most respectfully and affectionately yours,

SAMUEL COOPER.

TO DAVID HARTLEY.

Passy, 16 October, 1783.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have nothing material to write to you respecting public affairs; but I cannot let Mr. Adams, who will see you, go without a line to inquire after your welfare, to inform you of mine, and assure you of my constant respect and attachment.

I think with you, that your Quaker article is a good one, and that men will in time have sense enough to adopt it, but I fear that time is not yet come.

What would you think of a proposition, if I should make it, of a compact between England, France, and America? America would be as happy as the Sabine girls, if she could be the means of uniting in perpetual peace her father and her husband. What repeated follies are those repeated wars! You do not want to conquer and govern one another. Why then should you be continually employed in injuring and destroying one another? How many excellent things might have been done to promote the internal welfare of each country; what bridges, roads, canals, and other

useful public works and institutions, tending to the common felicity, might have been made and established with the money and men foolishly spent during the last seven centuries by our mad wars in doing one another mischief! You are near neighbours, and each have very respectable qualities. Learn to be quiet and to respect each other's rights. You are all Christians. One is *The Most Christian King*, and the other *Defender of the Faith.* Manifest the propriety of these titles by your future conduct. "By this," says Christ, "shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another." "Seek peace, and ensue it." Adieu.

Yours, &c.

B. Franklin.

TO DAVID HARTLEY.

Passy, 22 October, 1783.

I received my dear friend's kind letter of the 4th instant from Bath with your proposed temporary convention, which you desire me to show to my colleagues. They are both by this time in London, where you will undoubtedly see and converse with them on the subject. The apprehension you mention, that the cement of the confederation may be annihilated, &c., has not, I think, any foundation. There is sense enough in America to take care of their own china vase. I see much in your papers about our divisions and distractions, but I hear little of them from America; and I know that most of the letters, said to come from there with such accounts, are mere London fictions. I will consider attentively the proposition above mentioned, against the return of my colleagues, when I hope our commission will have arrived.

I rejoice to hear that your dear sister's recovery

advances, and that your brother is well. Please to present my affectionate respects to them, and believe me ever yours, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Financial Difficulties of France. — Sweden, Denmark, Portugal.

Passy, 1 November, 1783.

SIR,

Enclosed is a copy of my last, which went by the English packet. I heard after I wrote it, that, the French packet putting back by contrary winds, Mr Thaxter had an opportunity of getting on board her, and that she sailed the 26th of September.

The mentioned new commission is not yet come to hand. Mr. Hartley is not returned, and I hear will stay for the meeting of Parliament, which is to be the 11th instant, and he will not come hither till the recess for the Christmas holidays. Mr. Jay went to England about three weeks since on some personal affairs; and Mr. Adams followed last week to see that country, and take some exercise during this vacancy of business.

This court is now at Fontainebleau, but will return to Versailles in a few days. Its good disposition towards us continues. The late failure of payment in the Caisse d'Escompte, an institution similar to the Bank of England, occasioned partly by its having gone too far in assisting the government with money, and the inability of the government to support their credit, though extremely desirous of doing it, is a fresh proof that our not obtaining a further loan was not occasioned

by want of good will to assist us, as some have unjustly supposed, but by a real want of the means. Money is at present unaccountably scarce here; what is arrived and expected in Spain since the peace, it is thought, will set things right. The government has proposed a second lottery for this year, by which they borrow twenty-four millions, and it is filled readily. This helps, and the Caisse d'Escompte goes on again with its operations; but it is said the interest paid by the lottery plan is nearly seven per cent.

I have received the duplicates of your Excellency's letter of the 15th of July, to the Commissioners, which is very satisfactory, though it came to hand but lately. The first, sent *viâ* New York, has not yet appeared. I have sent copies of it to the Hague and Madrid. The substance is published in several papers.

I have acquainted the minister of Sweden, that I have received the ratification of the treaty; and he has written to me, that he shall be in town in a few days, when he will make the exchange. The conclusion of the Danish treaty waits only for the commission and instructions from Congress. The ambassador of Portugal informed me lately, that his court had our proposed plan under consideration, and that we should soon hear from them. I sent it to Congress by Barney, and hear the ship is arrived. A commission and instructions will be wanting for that also, should the Congress be disposed to conclude a treaty with that nation.

I see by the public prints that the Congress have ratified the contract I made with the minister here, respecting the loans and aids we had received; but the ratification itself, though directed to be sent me, has never come to hand, and I am often asked for it. I beg it may be forwarded by the first opportunity.

There has been with me lately M. Pierre du Calvet, a merchant of Montreal, who, when our army was in Canada, furnished our generals and officers with many things they wanted, taking their receipts and promissory notes for payment; and, when the English repossessed the country, he was imprisoned, and his estate seized, on account of the services he had rendered us. He has shown me the originals of his papers, which I think are genuine. He produced also a quantity of Congress paper, which he says he received in payment for some of the supplies, and which appeared to me of our first emissions, and yet all fresh and clean, as having passed through no other hands. When he was discharged from prison, he could not obtain permission to go into the United States to claim the debt, but was allowed to go to England; and from thence he came hither to solicit payment from me. Having no authority to meddle with such debts, and the sum being considerable, I refused, and advised him to take passage for America, and make his application to Congress. He said he was grown old, much broken and weakened by near three years' imprisonment, and that the voyage from Canada to London had like to have been too much for him, he being sick all the way; so that he could not think of another, though distressed for want of his money. He appears an honest man, and his case a hard one. I have therefore undertaken to forward his papers, and I beg leave to recommend them to the speedy consideration of Congress, to whom I request you would be pleased to present my dutiful respects, and assure them of my most faithful services. With great esteem and regard, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM GIACOMO F. CROCCO TO B. FRANKLIN.

Cadiz, 25 November, 1783.

Sir,

On the 15th of July last, I had the honor to acquaint your Excellency of my arrival in Europe, and that I was appointed by his Majesty, the Emperor of Morocco, bearer of the answer to the Congress, Sovereign of the Thirteen United States of North America, and that, according to my instructions, I was to meet at Paris the ambassador, that would be appointed by the Congress, to sign at the Court of Morocco the treaty of peace and commerce, agreeably to the proposals made to his Imperial Majesty, by Robert Montgomery, in his letter dated at Alicant, the 4th of January, 1783. Since I have been at the court of Madrid, where I had some commissions from the Emperor, and to see the execution of them, I came to this place, from whence I intend to embark in three or four months for Barbary, unless in the mean time I should receive an answer from your Excellency, with orders, that Mr. Richard Harrison should give me for my travelling charges fifteen hundred hard dollars, although the courts of Europe are accustomed to allow the ministers of my master at the rate of ten pounds sterling per day, while they are in Europe, to defray their expenses, besides presents for their good offices in those important affairs.

His Imperial Majesty was graciously pleased at my solicitation to agree, at the request of Congress, to grant them a treaty of peace (which other powers in Europe could not obtain but after many years), and my return, without the full execution of his commands, I apprehend may for ever indispose him against the United Provinces. I remain most truly, Sir, &c.

Giacomo F. Crocco.

FROM SIR JOSEPH BANKS TO B. FRANKLIN.

Ascent of a Balloon.

Soho Square, 28 November, 1783.

Dear Sir,

I am in truth much indebted to you for the favor you have done me in transmitting the copy of the *procès verbal* on Montgolfier's experiment, which I have this moment received. The experiment becomes now interesting in no small degree. I laughed when balloons, of scarce more importance than soap bubbles, occupied the attention of France; but when men can with safety pass and do pass more than five miles in the first experiment, I begin to fancy that I espy the hand of the master in the education of the infant of knowledge, which so speedily attains such a degree of maturity, and do not scruple to guess that my old friend, who used to assist me when I was younger, has had some share in the success of this enterprise.

On Tuesday last a miserable taffeta balloon was let loose here under the direction of a Mr. Zambeccari, an Italian nobleman, as I hear. It was ten feet in diameter, and filled with inflammable air made from the filings of iron and vitriolic acid. The silk was oiled, the seams covered with tar, and the outside gilt. It had been shown for several days floating about in a public room, at a shilling for the sight, and half a crown for the admission when it should be let loose.

The day was fine; the wind a gentle breeze from the north. At a few minutes after one o'clock it set out, and before night fell at a small village near Petworth in Sussex, having run over about forty-eight miles of country. The countryman, who first saw it, observed it in its descent. It appeared at first small, and,

increasing fast, surprised him so much that he ran away. He returned, however, and found it burst by the expansion of the contained fluid.

I wish I had somewhat more interesting to tell you of, but I am this moment risen from the dinner, which I annually give to the auditors of the treasurer's account. I would not delay my thanks to you, and I trust you will make some allowance for the effects of the festivities of the day, which have, I fear, cramped my accuracy; but I can assure you they have not diminished the real gratitude, with which I declare myself your obliged and faithful servant,

JOSEPH BANKS.

TO WILLIAM CARMICHAEL.

Proposed Treaty with Morocco.

Passy, 15 December, 1783.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I am much concerned to find by your letter to my grandson, that you are hurt by my long silence, and that you ascribe it to a supposed diminution of my friendship. Believe me, that is by no means the case; but I am too much harassed by a variety of correspondence, together with gout and gravel, which induce me to postpone doing what I often fully intend to do, and particularly writing, where the urgent necessity of business does not seem to require its being done immediately, my sitting too much at the desk having already almost killed me; besides, since Mr. Jay's residence here, I imagined he might keep you fully informed of what was material for you to know; and I beg you to be assured of my constant and sincere esteem and affection.

I do not know whether you have been informed, that a Mr. Montgomery, who lives at Alicant, took upon himself (for I think he had no authority) to make overtures last winter, in behalf of our States, towards a treaty with the Emperor of Morocco. In consequence of his proceedings I received a letter in August from a person, who acquainted me, that he was arrived in Spain by the Emperor's order, and was to come to Paris, there to receive and conduct to Morocco the minister of Congress appointed to make that treaty, intimating at the same time an expectation of money to defray his expenses. I communicated the letter to Mr. Jay. The conduct of Mr. Montgomery appeared to us very extraordinary and irregular; and the idea of a messenger from Morocco coming to Paris to meet and conduct a minister of Congress, appearing absurd and extravagant, as well as the demand of money by a person unknown, I made no answer to the letter; and I know not whether Mr. Jay made any to Mr. Montgomery, who wrote about the same time. But I have lately received another letter from the same person, a copy of which I enclose, together with my answer open for your perusal, and it is submitted to your discretion whether to forward it or not. The Mr. *Crocco*, who writes to me, having been, as he says, at Madrid, you possibly may know more of him than I can, and judge whether he is really a person in credit with the Emperor, and sent as he pretends to be, or not rather an *Escroc*, as the French call cheats and impostors.

I would not be wanting in any thing proper for me to do towards keeping that Prince in good humor with us, till the pleasure of Congress is known, and therefore would answer Mr. Crocco, if he be in his employ; but am loth to commit myself in correspondence with

a *fripon*. It will be strange, if, being at Madrid, he did not address himself to you. With great and unalterable regard, I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO GIACOMO FRANCESCO CROCCO.

Paris, 15 December, 1783.

SIR,

I have just received the letter you did me the honor of writing to me the 25th past. I did indeed receive your former letter of July, but, being totally a stranger to the mentioned proceedings of Mr. Montgomery, and having no orders from Congress on the subject, I knew not how to give you any satisfactory answer, till I should receive further information; and I communicated your letter to Mr. Jay, minister of the United States for Spain, in whose district Mr. Montgomery is, and who is more at hand than I am for commencing that negotiation.

Mr. Jay, who is at present in England, has possibly written to you, though his letter may have miscarried, to acquaint you, that Mr. Montgomery had probably no authority from Congress to take the step he has done, and that it was not likely, that they, desiring to make a treaty with the Emperor, would think of putting his Majesty to the trouble of sending a person to Paris to receive and conduct their minister, since they have ships, and could easily land him at Cadiz, or present him at one of the Emperor's ports. We have, however, written to Congress, acquainting them with what we had been informed of, the good and favorable disposition of his Imperial Majesty to enter into a treaty of amity and commerce with the United States; and

we have no doubt but that, as soon as their affairs are a little settled, which, by so severe a war carried on in the bowels of their country by one of the most powerful nations of Europe, have necessarily been much deranged, they will readily manifest equally good dispositions, and take all the proper steps to cultivate and secure the friendship of a monarch, whose character I know they have long esteemed and respected. I am, Sir, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

American Commissioners. — Signing of the Definitive Treaties. — British Court. — American Constitutions published in the French Language. — Treaties with European Powers. — Paul Jones.

Passy, 25 December, 1783.

SIR,

Not having heard of the appointment of a new secretary for foreign affairs, I take the liberty of addressing this despatch directly to your Excellency. I received by Captain Barney a letter from the late President, directed to the Commissioners, dated November the 1st, with a set of instructions, dated the 29th of October, a resolution of the same date respecting Hamburg, and another of the 1st of November, relating to Captain Paul Jones, all which will be duly regarded.

Captain Jones, in passing through England, communicated these papers to Mr. Adams, then at London. Mr. Adams, disappointed in not finding among them the commission we had been made to expect, empowering us to make a treaty of commerce with England, wrote to me, that he imagined it might be contained in a packet that was directed to me, and requested to

be immediately informed; adding, that, in case no such commission was come, he should depart directly for Holland; so I suppose he is now there. Mr. Laurens is gone to England, with an intention of embarking soon for America. Mr. Jay is at Bath, but expected here daily. The English ministers, the Duke of Manchester and Mr. Hartley, are both at present in Parliament. As soon as either of them returns, we shall endeavour to obtain an additional article to the treaty, explaining that mentioned in the instructions.

The affairs of Ireland are still unsettled. The Parliament and volunteers are at variance; the latter are uneasy, that, in the late negotiations for a treaty of commerce between England and America, the British ministers had made no mention of Ireland, and they seem to desire a separate treaty of commerce between America and that kingdom.

It was certainly disagreeable to the English ministers, that all their treaties for peace were carried on under the eye of the French court. This began to appear towards the conclusion, when Mr. Hartley refused going to Versailles, to sign there with the other powers our definitive treaty, and insisted on its being done at Paris, which we in good humor complied with, but at an earlier hour, that we might have time to acquaint Count de Vergennes before he was to sign with the Duke of Manchester.

The Dutch definitive treaty was not then ready, and the British court now insists on finishing it either at London or the Hague. If, therefore, the commission to us, which has been so long delayed, is still intended, perhaps it will be well to instruct us to treat either here or at London, as we may find most convenient.

The treaty may be conducted, even there, in concert and in the confidence of communication with the

ministers of our friends, whose advice may be of use to us.

With respect to the British court, we should, I think, be constantly upon our guard, and impress strongly upon our minds, that, though it has made peace with us, it is not in truth reconciled either to us, or to its loss of us, but still flatters itself with hopes, that some change in the affairs of Europe, or some disunion among ourselves, may afford them an opportunity of recovering their dominion, punishing those who have most offended, and securing our future dependence. It is easy to see by the general turn of the ministerial newspapers (light things, indeed, as straws and feathers, but like them they show which way the wind blows), and by the malignant improvement their ministers make, in all the foreign courts, of every little accident or dissension among us, the riot of a few soldiers at Philadelphia, the resolves of some town meetings, the reluctance to pay taxes, &c., all which are exaggerated, to represent our government as so many anarchies, of which the people themselves are weary, and the Congress as having lost its influence, being no longer respected; I say it is easy to see from this conduct, that they bear us no good will, and that they wish the reality of what they are pleased to imagine. They have, too, a numerous royal progeny to provide for, some of whom are educated in the military line. In these circumstances we cannot be too careful to preserve the friendships we have acquired abroad, and the union we have established at home, to secure our credit by a punctual discharge of our obligations of every kind, and our reputation by the wisdom of our councils; since we know not how soon we may have a fresh occasion for friends, for credit, and for reputation.

The extravagant misrepresentations of our political state in foreign countries, made it appear necessary to give them better information, which I thought could not be more effectually and authentically done, than by publishing a translation into French, now the most general language in Europe, of the book of Constitutions, which had been printed by order of Congress. This I accordingly got well done, and presented two copies, handsomely bound, to every foreign minister here, the one for himself, the other more elegant for his Sovereign. It has been well taken, and has afforded matter of surprise to many, who had conceived mean ideas of the state of civilization in America, and could not have expected so much political knowledge and sagacity had existed in our wilderness. And from all parts I have the satisfaction to hear, that our constitutions in general are much admired. I am persuaded, that this step will not only tend to promote the emigration to our country of substantial people from all parts of Europe, by the numerous copies I shall disperse, but will facilitate our future treaties with foreign courts, who could not before know what kind of government and people they had to treat with. As, in doing this, I have endeavoured to further the apparent views of Congress in the first publication, I hope it may be approved, and the expense allowed. I send herewith one of the copies.

Our treaties with Denmark and Portugal remain unfinished, for want of instructions respecting them from Congress, and a commission empowering some minister or ministers to conclude them. The Emperor of Morocco, we understand, has expressed a disposition to make a treaty of amity and commerce with the United States. A Mr. Montgomery, who is a merchant settled at A icant, has been, it seems, rather forward in pro-

posing a negotiation, without authority for so doing, and has embarrassed us a little, as may be seen by some letters I enclose.* Perhaps it would be well for the Congress to send a message to that Prince, expressing their respect and regard for him, till such time as they may judge it convenient to appoint the ambassador in form, furnished with proper presents, to make a treaty with him. The other Barbary States, too, seem to require consideration, if we propose to carry on any trade in the Mediterranean; but, whether the security of that trade is of sufficient importance to be worth purchasing at the rate of the tributes usually exacted by those piratical States, is a matter of doubt, on which I cannot at present form a judgment.

I shall immediately proceed, in pursuance of the first instruction, to take the proper steps for acquainting his Imperial Majesty of Germany with the dispositions of Congress, having some reason to believe the overture may be acceptable. His minister here is of late extremely civil to me, and we are on very good terms. I have likewise an intimate friend at that court.

With respect to other powers, it seems best not to make advances at present, but to meet and encourage them when made, which I shall not fail to do, as I have already done as to those of Sweden, Denmark, and Portugal. Possibly Hamburg, to whom I have forwarded the letter of Congress, may send a minister to America, if they wish for a treaty, to conclude it there. They have no minister here.

I have lately received a memorial from the minister of Denmark, respecting a ship of that nation, the *Providentia*, taken by one of our privateers and carried into

* The letters from G. F. Crocco. See Vol. IX. p. 530; and above p. 31.

Boston. I enclose a copy of it, and request to be furnished with directions and informations for the answer. It may be well to send me a copy of the proceedings in the courts. From a perusal of the papers communicated with it, I am satisfied that the cargo was clearly British property.

We have hitherto entered into no engagements respecting the armed neutrality, and, in obedience to the fifth instruction, we shall take care to avoid them hereafter. The treaty between this court and the United States, for regulating the powers, privileges, &c. of consuls, is at length completed, and is transcribing in order to be signed. I hope to transmit a copy by the next packet. I have received the Congress ratification of the two money treaties, which will be soon exchanged, when I shall send copies of them with that of Sweden.

I have given, and shall continue to give, Captain Paul Jones all the assistance in my power, towards recovering the prize money; and I hope it may soon be accomplished.

When Mr. Jay returns, I shall desire him to make the inquiry directed in the fourth instruction, respecting the expedition under that commodore, and report thereon to Congress. In the mean time I can answer respecting one of the questions, that the King paid the whole expense, and that no part of it has ever been placed to the account of Congress. There exists indeed a demand of one Puchelberg, a person in the employ of M. Schweighauser, of about thirty thousand livres, for provisions and other things furnished to Captain Landais, after he took the *Alliance* out of the hands of Captain Jones; but, as the ship was at that time under the King's supply, who, having borrowed her for the expedition when fitted for sea and just

ready to sail with Mr. Adams, had ordered her to be delivered in the same condition, free of all charges accrued, or accruing, by her being in Holland and in L'Orient, and as M. Puchelberg had not only no orders from me to furnish Captain Landais, but acted contrary to my orders given to M. Schweighauser, and contrary to the orders of M. Schweighauser himself, I refused to pay his account, which besides appeared extravagant, and it has never yet been paid.

I shall do my best in executing the third instruction, respecting our claim upon Denmark. I have written to London to obtain, if possible, an account of the sums insured upon the ships delivered up, as such an account may be some guide in the valuation of the prizes.

A Captain Williams, formerly in the British service, and employed upon the Lakes, has given me a paper containing information of the state of the back country. As those informations may possibly be of some use, I send herewith the paper. Mr. Carmichael has sent me the accounts of the money transactions at Madrid. As soon as Mr. Jay returns, they will be examined.

Be pleased to present my dutiful respects to Congress, and assure them of my most faithful services. With great esteem and regard, I have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.*

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* The "Set of Instructions," alluded to in this letter may be found in the *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. X. p. 222. The resolutions respecting Hamburg and Paul Jones are contained in the *Secret Journal of Congress*, Vol. III. pp. 416, 430.

TO ROBERT MORRIS.

Difficulty of meeting Drafts on the public Account. — Salaries of the American Ministers in Europe. — Contingent Expenses. — Taxation. — Nature of Property in Civil Society. — The Marquis de Lafayette.

Passy, 25 December, 1783.

Sir,

I have received your favor of the 20th of September, for which I thank you. My apprehension, that the union with France might be diminished by accounts from home, was occasioned by the extravagant and violent language held here by a public person, in public company, which had that tendency; and it was natural for me to think his letters might hold the same language, in which I was right; for I have since had letters from Boston informing me of it. Luckily here, and I hope there, it is imputed to the true cause, a disorder in the brain, which, though not constant, has its fits too frequent. I will not fill my letter with an account of those discourses. Mr. Laurens, when you see him, can give it to you; I mean such as he heard in company with other persons, for I would not have him relate private conversations. They distressed me much at the time, being then at your earnest instance soliciting for more aids of money; the success of which solicitation such ungrateful and provoking language might, I feared, have had a tendency to prevent. Enough of this at present.

I have been exceedingly hurt and afflicted by the difficulty some of your late bills met with in Holland. As soon as I received the letter from Messrs. Willinck & Co., which I enclose, I sent for Mr. Grand, who brought me a sketch of his account with you, by which

it appeared that the demands upon us, existing and expected, would more than absorb the funds in his hands. We could not indulge the smallest hope of obtaining further assistance here, the public finances being in a state of embarrassment, private persons full of distrust occasioned by the stoppage of payment at the *Caisse d' Escompte*, and money in general extremely scarce. But he agreed to do what I proposed, and lend his credit in the way of drawing and redrawing between Holland and Paris, to gain time till you could furnish funds to reimburse Messrs. Willinck & Co. I believe he made this proposition to them by the return of the express. I know not why it was not accepted. Mr. Grand will himself, I suppose, give you an account of all the transaction, and of his application to Messrs. Couteulx & Co.; therefore, I need not add more upon this disagreeable subject.

I have found difficulties in settling the account of salaries with the other ministers, that have made it impracticable for me to do it. I have, therefore, after keeping the bills that were to have been proportioned among us long in my hands, given them up to Mr. Grand, who, finding the same difficulties, will, I suppose, return them to you. None has come to hand for the two or three last quarters, and we are indebted to his kindness for advancing us money, or we must have run in debt for our subsistence. He risks in doing this, since he has not for it your orders.

There arise frequently contingent expenses, for which no provision has yet been made. In a former letter to the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, I gave a list of them, and desired to know the pleasure of Congress concerning them. I have only had for answer, that they were under consideration, and that he believed house-rent would not be allowed; but I am still in

uncertainty as to that and the rest. I wish some resolutions were taken on this point of contingences, that I may know how to settle my accounts with Mr. Barclay. American ministers in Europe are too remote from their constituents to consult them, and take their orders on every occasion, as the ministers here of European courts can easily do. There seems, therefore, a necessity of allowing more to their discretion, and of giving them a credit to a certain amount on some banker, who may answer their orders; for which, however, they should be accountable. I mention this for the sake of other ministers, hoping and expecting soon to be discharged myself, and also for the good of the service.

The remissness of our people in paying taxes is highly blamable; the unwillingness to pay them is still more so. I see, in some resolutions of town meetings, a remonstrance against giving Congress the power to take, as they call it, the people's money out of their pockets, though only to pay the interest and principal of debts duly contracted. They seem to mistake the point. Money, justly due from the people, is their creditors' money, and no longer the money of the people, who, if they withhold it, should be compelled to pay by some law.

All property, indeed, except the savage's temporary cabin, his bow, his matchcoat, and other little acquisitions, absolutely necessary for his subsistence, seems to me to be the creature of public convention. Hence the public has the right of regulating descents, and all other conveyances of property, and even of limiting the quantity and the uses of it. All the property that is necessary to a man, for the conservation of the individual and the propagation of the species, is his natural right, which none can justly deprive him of;

but all property superfluous to such purposes is the property of the public, who, by their laws, have created it, and who may therefore by other laws dispose of it, whenever the welfare of the public shall demand such disposition. He that does not like civil society on these terms, let him retire and live among savages. He can have no right to the benefits of society, who will not pay his club towards the support of it.

The Marquis de Lafayette, who loves to be employed in our affairs, and is often very useful, has lately had several conversations with the ministers and persons concerned in forming new regulations, respecting the commerce between our two countries, which are not yet concluded. I therefore thought it well to communicate to him a copy of your letter, which contains so many sensible and just observations on that subject. He will make a proper use of them, and perhaps they may have more weight, as appearing to come from a Frenchman, than they would have if it were known that they were the observations of an American. I perfectly agree with you in all the sentiments you have expressed on this occasion.*

I am sorry for the public's sake, that you are about to quit your office, but on personal considerations I shall congratulate you; for I cannot conceive of a more happy man, than he, who having been long loaded with public cares, finds himself relieved from them, and enjoying repose in the bosom of his friends and family. With sincere regard and attachment, I am ever, dear Sir, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

* Many particulars respecting the interest taken by Lafayette in the commercial relations between France and the United States, and his endeavours to promote and extend them, are contained in his letters to the President of Congress. See *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. X. pp. 5–66.

FROM JOHN JAY TO B. FRANKLIN.

Bath, 26 December, 1783.

Dear Sir,

Since we parted, I have been so much and so long indisposed, as that, except short letters to Mrs. Jay, I have denied myself the pleasure of writing to my friends. The kindness you have shown to us both has, nevertheless, not been forgotten, nor has my disposition to acknowledge and be influenced by it in the least abated.

We have lately had a report here, that you were very ill with the stone; and some have said that you intended to seek relief from an operation. This report has alarmed your friends, and I am anxious to know how far it may be well founded. It would give me sincere satisfaction to have it contradicted under your own hand.

I decline saying any thing about politics for obvious reasons. The public papers afford you the means of forming a judgment of them, especially as your long experience and knowledge of this country enable you to see further than ordinary observers. There are many in this country, who speak of you with great respect. The honest Whig Club drank your health very affectionately. There are others, who like you as little as the eagle did the cat, and probably for the same reasons. When we meet, we will talk these matters over with less reserve than I can write. Present my affectionate compliments to your two grandsons, and believe me to be, with great esteem and regard, dear Sir, &c

John Jay

TO THOMAS MIFFLIN, PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Dr. Franklin requests Permission of Congress to be recalled from France.

Passy, 26 December, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

I congratulate you very sincerely on your appointment to that very honorable station, the Presidency of Congress. Every testimony you receive of the public sense of your services and talents, gives me pleasure.

I have written to you a long letter on business, in my quality of minister.* This is a private letter, respecting my personal concerns, which I presume to trouble you with on the score of our ancient friendship.

In a letter of the 12th of March, 1781, I stated my age and infirmities to the Congress, and requested they would be pleased to recall me, that I might enjoy the little left me of the evening of life in repose, and in the sweet society of my friends and family. I was answered by the then President, that, when peace should be made, if I persisted in the same request, it should be granted; I acquiesced; the preliminaries were signed in November, 1782, and I then repeated my petition.† A year is past, and I have no answer. Undoubtedly, if the Congress should think my continuing here necessary for the public service, I ought, as a good citizen, to submit to their judgment and pleasure; but, as they may easily supply my place to advantage, that cannot be the case. I suppose, therefore, that it is merely the multiplicity of more important affairs, that has put my request out of their mind. What

* See above, p. 36.

† See a letter to Robert R. Livingston, dated December 5th, 1782. Vol. IX. p. 436.

I would then desire of you is, to put this matter in train to be moved and answered as soon as possible, that I may arrange my affairs accordingly.

In the first letter above mentioned, to which I beg leave to refer you, I gave a character of my grandson, William Temple Franklin, and solicited for him the favor and protection of Congress. I have nothing to abate of that character; on the contrary, I think him so much improved as to be capable of executing, with credit to himself and advantage to the public, any employment in Europe the Congress may think fit to honor him with. He has been seven years in the service, and is much esteemed by all that know him, particularly by the minister here, who, since my new disorder (the stone) makes my going to Versailles inconvenient to me, transacts our business with him in the most obliging and friendly manner. It is natural for me, who love him, to wish to see him settled before I die, in some employ that may probably be permanent; and I hope you will be so good to me, as to get that affair likewise moved and carried through in his favor.

He has, I think, this additional merit to plead, that he has served in my office as secretary several years, for the small salary of three hundred louis a year, while the Congress gave one thousand a year to the secretaries of other ministers, who had not half the employ for a secretary that I had. For it was long before a consul was sent here, and we had all that business on our hands, with a great deal of admiralty business in examining and condemning captures, taken by our cruisers and by the French cruisers under American commissions; besides the constant attendance in examining and recording the acceptances of the Congress bills of exchange, which has been, from

the immense number, very fatiguing; with many other extra affairs, not usually occurring to other ministers, such as the care of the prisoners in England, and the constant correspondence relating to them; in all of which he served me as secretary, with the assistance only of a clerk at low wages (fifty louis a year), so that the saving has been very considerable to the public. I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Recommending Mr. Hodgson as Consul in London.

Passy, 26 December, 1783.

SIR,

If the Congress should think it fit to have a consul for the United States in London, and do not appoint one of our own countrymen to that office, I beg leave to mention the merits of Mr. William Hodgson, a merchant of that city, who has always been a zealous friend of America, was a principal promoter of the subscription for the relief of American prisoners, and chairman of the committee for dispensing the money raised by that subscription. He also took the trouble of applying the moneys I furnished him with, when the subscription was exhausted, and constantly assisted me in al. the negotiations I had with the British ministers, in their favor, wherein he generally succeeded, being a man of weight and credit, very active, and much esteemed for his probity and integrity. These his services, continued steadily during the whole war, seem to entitle him to the favorable notice of Congress, when any occasion offers of doing him service or pleasure. With great respect, I have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO MRS. MARY HEWSON.

Passy, 26 December, 1783.

DEAR POLLY,

In reading Mr. Viny's letter, when I received it, I missed seeing yours, which was written behind it in a corner. I thank you much for your kind offer respecting my grandson. I was fully resolved on send ing him in September last, and engaged Mr. Jay, one of my colleagues, then going to England, to take him over in his company. But, when it came to be proposed to him, he showed such an unwillingness to leave me, and Temple such a fondness for retaining him, that I concluded to keep him till I should go over myself. He behaves very well, and we love him very much.

I send herewith two different French grammars, not knowing which to prefer, opinions here being divided. Your French master may take his choice, and you will present the other to my godson, as my new year's gift, with the two volumes of *Synonymes Français*, an excellent work. They will be left at Mr. Hodgson's, merchant in Coleman Street, where you may have them on sending for them.

Adieu, my dear friend. I long to see you and yours, but God only knows when that may happen. I am, nevertheless, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

January 1*st*, 1784. Health, and prosperity, and many happy years to my dear friend and her children, for whom I send the enclosed little books.

TO JOHN JAY.

Passy, 6 January, 1784.

Dear Sir,

I received your kind letter of the 26th past, and immediately sent that enclosed to Mrs. Jay, whom I saw a few days since with the children, all perfectly well. It is a happy thing, that the little ones are so finely past the smallpox, and I congratulate you upon it most cordially.

It is true, as you have heard, that I have the stone, but not that I have had thoughts of being cut for it. It it as yet very tolerable. It gives me no pain but when in a carriage on the pavement, or when I make some sudden quick movement. If I can prevent its growing larger, which I hope to do by abstemious living and gentle exercise, I can go on pretty comfortably with it to the end of my journey, which can now be at no great distance. I am cheerful, enjoy the company of my friends, sleep well, have sufficient appetite, and my stomach performs well its functions. The latter is very material to the preservation of health. I therefore take no drugs lest I should disorder it. You may judge that my disease is not very grievous, since I am more afraid of the medicines than of the malady.

It gives me pleasure to learn from you, that my friends still retain their regard for me. I long to see them again, but I doubt I shall hardly accomplish it. If our commission for the treaty of commerce were arrived, and we were at liberty to treat in England, I might then come over to you, supposing the English ministry disposed to enter into such a treaty.

I have, as you observe, some enemies in England, but they are my enemies as an *American;* I have also two or three in America, who are my enemies as a

minister; but I thank God there are not in the whole world any who are my enemies as a *man;* for by his grace, through a long life, I have been enabled so to conduct myself, that there does not exist a human being who can justly say, "Ben. Franklin has wronged me." This, my friend, is in old age a comfortable reflection. You too have, or may have, your enemies; but let not that render you unhappy. If you make a right use of them, they will do you more good than harm. They point out to us our faults; they put us upon our guard, and help us to live more correctly.

My grandsons are sensible of the honor of your remembrance, and join their respectful compliments and best wishes with those of, dear Sir, your affectionate humble servant,

B. Franklin.

TO SAMUEL CHASE.

Passy, 6 January, 1784.

Dear Sir,

I duly received your letter of the 18th of September,* with the papers that accompanied it; but being at that time afflicted with two painful disorders, the gout and gravel, I could not then give any attention to business; and, before my recovery, the letters and papers were both most unaccountably missing. I spent hours, from time to time, in searching for them, and delayed writing in continual hopes of finding them, which I was not able to do till within these few days, when, on removing a writing-press in my closet, I discovered that they had fallen and lay concealed behind it.

* At the time of writing this letter Mr. Chase was in London.

I had delivered the letter you enclosed to the Marquis de Lafayette, and, as the court was then at Fontainebleau, and I could not follow it by reason of my illness, I requested him to sound the Marquis de Castries on the subject of the loss of your ship. He did so; and the result of the conversation was, that, if you thought fit to prosecute the matter, you should present a memorial, upon which he might regularly take the affair into consideration. You mentioned your coming to Paris before finishing your other business, in case I should think there was a probability of obtaining compensation, either from the property of the captain, or the generosity of the Prince. I have not yet been able to learn any thing of the captain's circumstances; and, as clear proof of his delinquency must precede an application to the King, and perhaps the protest of Captain Belt will hardly be thought sufficient testimony, and other evidences corroborating cannot be obtained but with great expense and loss of time, and as the chicanery practised in the courts here to procure delay is immense and endless; on these considerations I cannot advise your coming hither for the purpose of such a prosecution to the prejudice of your other affairs; though I shall be happy to see you, when it may be convenient to you, and, when you are here, we will take the advice of some judicious persons, and if it appear possible for me to serve your cause, I shall do it with great pleasure.

M. de Rochambeau was not in town, but I forwarded Mr. Carroll's letter to him. I have written, as you desired, to Brest, and, as soon as I receive an answer, I will communicate it to you. I am not enough acquainted with the French laws or customs to inform you what claims the widow of M. le Vaché may have on his property. I only think I have heard, that mar-

riages by a Protestant minister are not deemed valid. I will make inquiry.

Since writing the above, I am informed that, if celebrated in a Protestant country according to the laws of that country, they are deemed valid here; as are also the marriages of Protestants here, if in the chapel of a Protestant ambassador.

I shall be glad to hear, that you have succeeded in recovering the public money, and that you continue to enjoy your health, being, with sincere and great esteem, dear Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO DAVID HARTLEY.

Change in Administration. — Hereditary Officers of State.

Passy, 7 January, 1784.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have this moment received your favor of the 25th past, acquainting me with the change in administration. I am not sure that in reforming the constitution, which is sometimes talked of, it would not be better to make your great officers of state hereditary, than to suffer the inconvenience of such frequent and total changes. Much faction and cabal would be prevented by having a hereditary First Lord of the Treasury, a hereditary Lord Chancellor, Privy Seal, President of Council, Secretary of State, First Lord of the Admiralty, &c. &c. It will not be said, that, the duties of these offices being important, we cannot trust to nature for the chance of requisite talents, since we have a hereditary set of judges in the last resort, the House of Peers; a hereditary King; and, in a certain German University, a hereditary professor of Mathematics.

We have not yet heard of the arrival of our express in America, who carried the Definitive Treaty. He sailed the 26th of September. As soon as the ratification arrives, I shall immediately send you word of it. With great esteem I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM CHARLES THOMSON TO B. FRANKLIN.

Treaty of Peace ratified by Congress.

Annapolis, 15 January, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

Yesterday nine States being for the first time since October last represented, Congress immediately took up and ratified the Definitive Treaty, with the unanimous consent not only of all the States represented, but of every individual member of Congress; and, that it might reach you with the greatest despatch, they immediately sent off Colonel Harmar with the ratification by the way of New York, there being no vessel sailing from this bay. They also send a duplicate to be forwarded by Mr. Morris, and this day, from an earnest desire that it may, if possible, arrive in due time, they have determined to send Colonel Franks with a triplicate, to take the chance of a vessel from some of the eastern ports.

I have the satisfaction to inform you, that a disposition begins to prevail in the States to comply with the requisitions of Congress, and to grant funds for the regular payment of the interest and discharge of the principal of the debts contracted during the war. I make no doubt but the creditors in Europe are anxious and uneasy at the backwardness of the States. But whoever consults the history of nations will find,

that taxation is among the late acts of government; that in governments, which have been long established, it is not without great difficulty that permanent funds are introduced, and even in the oldest governments new taxes often occasion great uneasiness. Considering, therefore, that in the United States every thing is new and unusual, instead of being surprised at the backwardness of the people in this respect, it is rather a matter of wonder, that they have made so great a progress, and have discovered such a facility in getting the better of that aversion to taxes, which is so universally prevalent. For my own part, I have a great confidence in the good sense of my countrymen in general, nor can I admit a doubt, that they will speedily fall upon measures to do justice to all the public creditors. Though you and I have lived to see a great work accomplished, yet much still remains to be done, to secure the happiness of this country. May that Almighty Being, who has thus far conducted us safely through many scenes of difficulty and distress, inspire the people of these United States with wisdom to improve the opportunity now afforded of becoming a happy nation.

I need not recommend Colonel Franks to your notice, as you are already acquainted with him. He has great merit for the early part he took, and the sacrifices he has made in the late controversy, and his steady adherence to our cause.

I long for the pleasure of seeing you, but forego that pleasure with the more ease, as I am sensible you are usefully employed in a work, which is of great importance to our country. I need not assure you that I am, with the most perfect esteem and respect, dear Sir, your affectionate old friend,

CHARLES THOMSON.

TO MRS. SARAH BACHE.

Order of the Cincinnati. — Hereditary Nobility. — Descending Honors.

Passy, 26 January, 1784.

My dear Child,

Your care in sending me the newspapers is very agreeable to me. I received by Captain Barney those relating to the *Cincinnati*. My opinion of the institution cannot be of much importance; I only wonder that, when the united wisdom of our nation had, in the articles of confederation, manifested their dislike of establishing ranks of nobility, by authority either of the Congress or of any particular State, a number of private persons should think proper to distinguish themselves and their posterity, from their fellow citizens, and form an order of *hereditary knights*, in direct opposition to the solemnly declared sense of their country! I imagine it must be likewise contrary to the good sense of most of those drawn into it by the persuasion of its projectors, who have been too much struck with the ribands and crosses they have seen hanging to the buttonholes of foreign officers. And I suppose those, who disapprove of it, have not hitherto given it much opposition, from a principle somewhat like that of your good mother, relating to punctilious persons, who are always exacting little observances of respect; that, "*if people can be pleased with small matters, it is a pity but they should have them.*"

In this view, perhaps, I should not myself, if my advice had been asked, have objected to their wearing their riband and badge themselves according to their fancy, though I certainly should to the entailing it as an honor on their posterity. For honor, worthily obtained (as that for example of our officers), is in its

nature a *personal* thing, and incommunicable to any but those who had some share in obtaining it. Thus among the Chinese, the most ancient, and from long experience the wisest of nations, honor does not *descend*, but *ascends*. If a man from his learning, his wisdom, or his valor, is promoted by the Emperor to the rank of Mandarin, his parents are immediately entitled to all the same ceremonies of respect from the people, that are established as due to the Mandarin himself; on the supposition that it must have been owing to the education, instruction, and good example afforded him by his parents, that he was rendered capable of serving the public.

This *ascending* honor is therefore useful to the state, as it encourages parents to give their children a good and virtuous education. But the *descending honor*, to a posterity who could have no share in obtaining it, is not only groundless and absurd, but often hurtful to that posterity, since it is apt to make them proud, disdaining to be employed in useful arts, and thence falling into poverty, and all the meannesses, servility, and wretchedness attending it; which is the present case with much of what is called the *noblesse* in Europe. Or if, to keep up the dignity of the family, estates are entailed entire on the eldest male heir, another pest to industry and improvement of the country is introduced, which will be followed by all the odious mixture of pride, and beggary, and idleness, that have half depopulated and *decultivated* Spain; occasioning continual extinction of families by the discouragements of marriage, and neglect in the improvement of estates.

I wish, therefore, that the Cincinnati, if they must go on with their project, would direct the badges of their order to be worn by their fathers and mothers, instead of handing them down to their children. It

would be a good precedent, and might have good effects. It would also be a kind of obedience to the fourth commandment, in which God enjoins us to *honor* our father and mother, but has nowhere directed us to honor our children. And certainly no mode of honoring those immediate authors of our being can be more effectual, than that of doing praiseworthy actions, which reflect honor on those who gave us our education; or more becoming, than that of manifesting, by some public expression or token, that it is to their instruction and example we ascribe the merit of those actions.

But the absurdity of *descending honors* is not a mere matter of philosophical opinion; it is capable of mathematical demonstration. A man's son, for instance, is but half of his family, the other half belonging to the family of his wife. His son, too, marrying into another family, his share in the grandson is but a fourth; in the great grandson, by the same process, it is but an eighth; in the next generation a sixteenth; the next a thirty-second; the next a sixty-fourth; the next an hundred and twenty-eighth; the next a two hundred and fifty-sixth; and the next a five hundred and twelfth; thus in nine generations, which will not require more than three hundred years (no very great antiquity for a family), our present Chevalier of the Order of Cincinnatus's share in the then existing knight, will be but a five hundred and twelfth part; which, allowing the present certain fidelity of American wives to be insured down through all those nine generations, is so small a consideration, that methinks no reasonable man would hazard for the sake of it the disagreeable consequences of the jealousy, envy, and ill will of his countrymen.

Let us go back with our calculation from this young

noble, the five hundred and twelfth part of the present knight, through his nine generations, till we return to the year of the institution. He must have had a father and mother, they are two; each of them had a father and mother, they are four. Those of the next preceding generation will be eight, the next sixteen, the next thirty-two, the next sixty-four, the next one hundred and twenty-eight, the next two hundred and fifty-six, and the ninth in this retrocession five hundred and twelve, who must be now existing, and all contribute their proportion of this future *Chevalier de Cincinnatus.* These, with the rest, make together as follows;

	2
	4
	8
	16
	32
	64
	128
	256
	512
Total	1022

One thousand and twenty-two men and women, contributors to the formation of one knight. And, if we are to have a thousand of these future knights, there must be now and hereafter existing one million and twenty-two thousand fathers and mothers, who are to contribute to their production, unless a part of the number are employed in making more knights than one. Let us strike off then the twenty-two thousand, on the supposition of this double employ, and then consider whether, after a reasonable estimation of the number of rogues, and fools, and scoundrels, and prosti-

tutes, that are mixed with, and help to make up necessarily their million of predecessors, posterity will have much reason to boast of the noble blood of the then existing set of Chevaliers of Cincinnatus. The future genealogists, too, of these Chevaliers, in proving the lineal descent of their honor through so many generations (even supposing honor capable in its nature of descending), will only prove the small share of this honor, which can be justly claimed by any one of them; since the above simple process in arithmetic makes it quite plain and clear, that, in proportion as the antiquity of the family shall augment, the right to the honor of the ancestor will diminish; and a few generations more would reduce it to something so small as to be very near an absolute nullity. I hope, therefore, that the Order will drop this part of their project, and content themselves, as the Knights of the Garter, Bath, Thistle, St. Louis, and other Orders of Europe do, with a life enjoyment of their little badge and riband, and let the distinction die with those who have merited it. This I imagine will give no offence. For my own part, I shall think it a convenience, when I go into a company where there may be faces unknown to me, if I discover, by this badge, the persons who merit some particular expression of my respect; and it will save modest virtue the trouble of calling for our regard, by awkward roundabout intimations of having been heretofore employed as officers in the Continental service.

The gentleman, who made the voyage to France to provide the ribands and medals, has executed his commission. To me they seem tolerably done; but all such things are criticized. Some find fault with the Latin, as wanting classical elegance and correctness; and, since our nine universities were not able to fur-

nish better Latin, it was pity, they say, that the mottos had not been in English. Others object to the title, as not properly assumable by any but General Washington, and a few others, who served without pay. Others object to the *bald eagle* as looking too much like a *dindon*, or turkey. For my own part, I wish the bald eagle had not been chosen as the representative of our country; he is a bird of bad moral character; he does not get his living honestly; you may have seen him perched on some dead tree, where, too lazy to fish for himself, he watches the labor of the fishing-hawk; and, when that diligent bird has at length taken a fish, and is bearing it to his nest for the support of his mate and young ones, the bald eagle pursues him, and takes it from him. With all this injustice he is never in good case; but, like those among men who live by sharping and robbing, he is generally poor, and often very lousy. Besides, he is a rank coward; the little *kingbird*, not bigger than a sparrow, attacks him boldly and drives him out of the district. He is therefore by no means a proper emblem for the brave and honest Cincinnati of America, who have driven all the *kingbirds* from our country; though exactly fit for that order of knights, which the French call *Chevaliers d'Industrie*.

I am, on this account, not displeased that the figure is not known as a bald eagle, but looks more like a turkey. For in truth, the turkey is in comparison a much more respectable bird, and withal a true original native of America. Eagles have been found in all countries, but the turkey was peculiar to ours; the first of the species seen in Europe, being brought to France by the Jesuits from Canada, and served up at the wedding table of Charles the Ninth.* He is, be-

* A learned friend of the Editor's has observed to him, that this is a mistake, as *Turkeys* were found in great plenty by Cortes, when he

sides, (though a little vain and silly, it is true, but not the worse emblem for that,) a bird of courage, and would not hesitate to attack a grenadier of the British guards, who should presume to invade his farmyard with a *red* coat on.

I shall not enter into the criticisms made upon their Latin. The gallant officers of America may not have the merit of being great scholars, but they undoubtedly merit much, as brave soldiers, from their country, which should therefore not leave them merely to *fame* for their "*virtutis premium*," which is one of their Latin mottos. Their "*esto perpetua*," another, is an excellent wish, if they meant it for their country; bad, if intended for their Order. The States should not only restore to them the *omnia* of their first motto,* which many of them have left and lost, but pay them justly, and reward them generously. They should not be suffered to remain, with all their new created chivalry, *entirely* in the situation of the gentleman in the story, which their *omnia reliquit* reminds me of. You know every thing makes me recollect some story. He had built a very fine house, and thereby much impaired his fortune. He had a pride, however, in showing it to his acquaintance. One of them, after viewing it all, remarked a motto over the door "ŌIA VANITAS." "What," says he, "is the meaning of this ŌIA? it is a word I don't understand." "I will tell you," said the gentleman; "I had a mind to have the motto cut on a piece of smooth marble, but there was not room

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invaded and conquered Mexico, before the time of Charles the Twelfth That this, and their being brought to old Spain, is mentioned by Peter Martyr of Anghiera, who was Secretary to the Council of the Indies established immediately after the discovery of America, *and personally acquainted with Columbus.* — W. T. F.

* "Omnia reliquit servare rempublicam."

for it between the ornaments, to be put in characters large enough to be read. I therefore made use of a contraction anciently very common in Latin manuscripts, whereby the *m*'s and *n*'s in words are omitted, and the omission noted by a little dash above, which you may see there; so that the word is *omnia*, OMNIA VANITAS." "O," said his friend, "I now comprehend the meaning of your motto, it relates to your edifice; and signifies, that, if you have abridged your *omnia*, you have, nevertheless, left your VANITAS legible at full length." I am, as ever, your affectionate father,

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM WILLIAM STRAHAN TO B. FRANKLIN.

Urging Dr. Franklin to visit England.

London, 1 February, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

I wrote to you in August last, in answer to your very kind note of July 29th, enclosing a line to you from Mrs. Bache, which I then forgot to return to you, but which I now enclose. This letter I sent by the common post, which I hope came safe to hand, though I have not had the pleasure of hearing from you since.

I therein acknowledged, and beg leave to repeat my warmest acknowledgments for the very friendly and effectual patronage, you and your good family on the other side of the water afforded my poor, helpless, and singularly distressed kinswoman, than whom none can be more grateful or more deserving the great kindness you have shown her. By this time, I dare say, you are convinced, that the high character I presumed to give you of her was in no shape exaggerated, and that she is really the worthy and accomplished young wo-

man I represented her to be. Her late letters to me are all full of the strongest expressions of gratitude for Mrs. Bache's continued goodness to her.

Notwithstanding what you told me in your last, I cannot, nor will I, renounce all hope of seeing you again, and that soon too. You have so many friends here, whom you love, because they love you, and whom you must therefore be anxiously eager to see, that I judge it needless to add any other inducements, though I could mention many, which I dare say will readily occur to yourself. In short, I am clearly for your spending the rest of your days here, where you know you may have every comfort and amusement this world can afford, and where you can most easily and most perfectly enjoy yourself in your own way. I earnestly request you will give all due attention to this advice, which I wish to impress upon you with all possible earnestness. One argument only will I now add more. I hear, and with real concern I hear it, that you are afflicted with the gout. I need not tell you, that here is the best medical assistance this world affords. And now I will not tease you more upon this subject, till I have the happiness of hearing from you again.

We are still in the greatest political confusion here. After several adjournments, we, the House of Commons, meet again to-morrow; but I do not hear that any conciliation, so much wanted, is likely to take place. What this will end in, it is impossible for me to say; but it is not probable we can remain many days longer in our present situation. My family are all in their ordinary health, and will be very happy to see you once more in this still most agreeable country. I remain with unalterable esteem and affection, dear Sir, &c.

WILLIAM STRAHAN.

TO HENRY LAURENS.

Remarks on the British Government.

Passy, 12 February, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

I received your favor of the 3d instant by your son, with the newspapers, for which I thank you. The disorders of that government, whose constitution has been so much praised, are come to a height that threatens some violent convulsion, if not a dissolution; and its physicians do not even seem to guess at the cause of the disease, and therefore prescribe insufficient remedies, such as place bills, more equal representation, more frequent elections, &c. &c. In my humble opinion, the malady consists in the enormous salaries, emoluments, and patronage of great offices. Ambition and avarice are separately strong passions. When they are united in pursuit of the same object, they are too strong to be governed by common prudence, or influenced by public spirit and love of country; they drive men irresistibly into factions, cabals, dissensions, and violent divisions, always mischievous to public counsels, destructive to the peace of society, and sometimes fatal to its existence. As long as the immense profits of these offices subsist, members of the shortest and most equally chosen parliaments will have them in view, and contend for them, and their contentions will have all the same ruinous consequences.

To me, then, there seems to be but one effectual remedy, and that not likely to be adopted by so corrupt a nation; which is, to abolish these profits, and make every place of *honor* a place of *burden.* By that means the effect of one of the passions abovementioned would be taken away, and something would

be added to counteract the other. Thus the number of competitors for great offices would be diminished, and the efforts of those, who still would obtain them, moderated.

Thank God we have now less connexion with the affairs of these people, and are more at liberty to take care of our own, which I hope we shall manage better.

We have a terrible winter here; such another in this country is not remembered by any man living. The snow has been thick upon the ground ever since Christmas; and the frost constant. My grandson joins in best compliments to yourself and Miss Laurens. With sincere esteem and affection, I have the honor to be, dear Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO WILLIAM STRAHAN.

Political Disorders in England.

Passy, 16 February, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

I received and read with pleasure your kind letter of the 1st instant, as it informed me of the welfare of you and yours. I am glad the accounts you have from your kinswoman at Philadelphia are agreeable, and I shall be happy if any recommendations from me can be serviceable to Dr. Ross, or any others, friends of yours, going to America.

Your arguments, persuading me to come once more to England, are very powerful. To be sure, I long to see again my friends there, whom I love abundantly; but there are difficulties and objections of several kinds, which at present I do not see how to get over.

I lament with you the political disorders England at

present labors under. Your papers are full of strange accounts of anarchy and confusion in America, of which we know nothing, while your own affairs are really in a deplorable situation. In my humble opinion, the root of the evil lies not so much in too long, or too unequally chosen Parliaments, as in the enormous salaries, emoluments, and patronage of your great offices; and that you will never be at rest till they are all abolished, and every place of honor made at the same time, instead of a place of profit, a place of expense and burden.

Ambition and avarice are each of them strong passions, and when they are united in the same persons, and have the same objects in view for their gratification, they are too strong for public spirit and love of country, and are apt to produce the most violent factions and contentions. They should therefore be separated, and made to act one against the other. Those places, to speak in our old style (brother type), may be good for the *chapel*, but they are bad for the master, as they create constant quarrels that hinder the business. For example, here are two months that your government has been employed in *getting its form to press;* which is not yet fit to *work on*, every page of it being *squabbled*, and the whole ready to fall into *pie*. The founts too must be very scanty, or strangely *out of sorts*, since your *compositors* cannot find either *upper* or *lower case letters* sufficient to set the word ADMINISTRATION, but are forced to be continually *turning for them*. However, to return to common (though perhaps too saucy) language, do not despair; you have still one resource left, and that not a bad one, since it may reunite the empire. We have some remains of affection for you, and shall always be ready to receive and take care of you in case of distress. So if you

nave not sense and virtue enough to govern yourselves, e'en dissolve your present old crazy constitution, and send members to Congress.

You will say my *advice* "smells of *Madeira.*" You are right. This foolish letter is mere chitchat *between ourselves* over the *second bottle.* If, therefore, you show it to anybody, (except our indulgent friends, Dagge and Lady Strahan) I will positively *solless* you. Yours ever most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO BENJAMIN VAUGHAN.

Reflections on the American Treaty with England.

Passy, March, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

You mention, that I may now see verified all you said about binding down England to so hard a peace. I suppose you do not mean by the American treaty; for we were exceeding favorable, in not insisting on the reparations so justly due for the wanton burnings of our fine towns, and devastations of our plantations in a war, now universally allowed to have been originally unjust. I may add, that you will also see verified all I said about the article respecting the royalists, that it will occasion more mischief than it was intended to remedy, and that it would have been better to have omitted all mention of them. England might have rewarded them according to their merits at no very great expense. After the harms they had done to us, it was imprudent to insist on our doing them good.

I am sorry for the overturn you mention of those beneficial systems of commerce, that would have been

exemplary to mankind. The making England entirely a free port would have been the wisest step ever taken for its advantage.

I wish much to see what you say a respectable friend of mine has undertaken to write respecting the peace. It is a pity it has been delayed. If it had appeared earlier, it might have prevented much mischief, by securing our friends in their situations; for we know not who will succeed them, nor what credit they will hold.

By my doubts of the propriety of my going soon to London, I meant no reflection on my friends or yours. If I had any call there besides the pleasure of seeing those whom I love, I should have no doubts. If I live to arrive there, I shall certainly embrace your kind invitation, and take up my abode with you. Make my compliments and respects acceptable to Mrs. Vaughan. I know not what foundation there can be for saying that I abuse England as much as before the peace. I am not apt, I think, to be abusive; of the two, I had rather be abused.

Enclosed are the letters you desire. I wish to hear from you more frequently, and to have, through you, such new pamphlets as you may think worth my reading. I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. Franklin.

FROM DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

London, 2 March, 1784.

My dear Friend,

Will you be so good as to transmit the enclosed to Mr. Jay? I am sorry that we are going to lose him from this side of the Atlantic. If your American ratification should arrive speedily, I might hope to have

the pleasure of seeing him again before his departure. As soon as I hear from you of the arrival of your ratification, I will immediately apply for the despatch of the British ratification. I wish very much to have the pleasure of conversing with you again. In hopes that that time may come soon, I have nothing further to say at present. Believe me always to be, what you have always known me to have been, a friend of general philanthropy, and particularly your ever most affectionate D. HARTLEY.

TO CHARLES THOMSON, SECRETARY OF CONGRESS.

Passy, 9 March, 1784.

SIR,

I received a few days since a letter from Annapolis, dated June the 5th, in your handwriting, but not signed, acquainting the Commissioners with the causes of delay in sending the ratification of the definitive treaty. The term was expired before that letter came to hand; but I hope no difficulty will arise from a failure in a point not essential, and which was occasioned by accidents. I have just received from Mr. Hartley a letter on the subject, of which I enclose a copy.

We have had a terrible winter, too, here, such as the oldest men do not remember, and indeed it has been very severe all over Europe.

I have exchanged ratifications with the ambassador of Sweden, and enclose a copy of that I received from him.

Mr. Jay is lately returned from England. Mr. Laurens is still there, but proposes departing for America next month, as does also Mr. Jay, with his family. Mr. Adams is in Holland, where he has been detained by business and bad weather. These absences have

occasioned some delays in our business, but not of much importance.

The war long expected between the Turks and Russians is prevented by a treaty, and it is thought an accommodation will likewise take place between them and the Emperor. Every thing here continues friendly and favorable to the United States. I am pestered continually with numbers of letters from people in different parts of Europe, who would go to settle in America, but who manifest very extravagant expectations, such as I can by no means encourage, and who appear otherwise to be very improper persons. To save myself trouble, I have just printed some copies of the enclosed little piece, which I purpose to send hereafter in answer to such letters. Be pleased to present my dutiful respects to Congress, and believe me to be, with sincere esteem, dear Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO HENRY LAURENS.

Passy, 12 March, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

I write this in great pain from the gout in both feet; but my young friend, your son, having informed me that he sets out for London to-morrow, I could not let slip the opportunity, as perhaps it is the only safe one that may occur before your departure for America. I wish mine was as near. I think I have reason to complain, that I am so long without an answer from Congress to my request of recall. I wish rather to die in my own country than here; and though the upper part of the building appears yet tolerably firm, yet, being undermined by the stone and gout united, its fall cannot be far distant.

You are so good as to offer me your friendly services. You cannot do me one more acceptable at present, than that of forwarding my dismission. In all other respects, as well as that, I shall ever look on your friendship as an honor to me; being with sincere and great esteem, dear Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. *March* 13. Having had a tolerable night, I find myself something better this morning. In reading over my letter, I perceive an omission of my thanks for your kind assurances of never forsaking my defence, should there be need. I apprehend that the violent antipathy of a certain person to me may have produced some calumnies, which, what you have seen and heard here may enable you to refute. You will thereby exceedingly oblige one, who has lived beyond all other ambition, than that of dying with the fair character he has long endeavoured to deserve. As to my infallibility, which you do not undertake to maintain, I am too modest myself to claim it, that is, *in general;* though when we come *to particulars*, I, like other people, give it up with difficulty. Steele says, that the difference between the Church of Rome, and the Church of England on that point, is only this; that the one pretends to be *infallible*, and the other to be *never in the wrong*. In this latter sense, we are most of us Church of England men, though few of us confess it, and express it so naturally and frankly, as a certain lady here, who said, "I do not know how it happens, but I meet with nobody, except myself, that is *always* in the right; *Je ne trouve que moi qui a toujours raison.*"

My grandson joins me in affectionate respects to you and the young lady; with best wishes for your health and prosperity.

TO MRS. MARY HEWSON.

Passy, 19 March, 1784.

You will forget me quite, my dear old friend, if I do not write to you now and then.

I still exist, and still enjoy some pleasure in that existence, though now in my seventy-ninth year. Yet I feel the infirmities of age come on so fast, and the building to need so many repairs, that in a little time the owner will find it cheaper to pull it down and build a new one. I wish, however, to see you first, but I begin to doubt the possibility. My children join in love to you and yours, with your affectionate friend,

B. Franklin.

TO M. DE LA CONDAMINE.

Animal Magnetism. — Cure of Diseases.

Passy, 19 March, 1784.

Sir,

I received the very obliging letter you did me the honor of writing to me the 8th instant, with the epigram, for which, please to accept my thanks.

You desire my sentiments concerning the cures performed by Camus and Mesmer. I think, that, in general, maladies caused by obstructions may be treated by electricity with advantage. As to the animal magnetism, so much talked of, I must doubt its existence till I can see or feel some effect of it. None of the cures said to be performed by it have fallen under my observation, and there being so many disorders which cure themselves, and such a disposition in mankind to deceive themselves and one another on these occasions, and living long has given me so frequent op-

portunities of seeing certain remedies cried up as curing every thing, and yet soon after totally laid aside as useless, I cannot but fear that the expectation of great advantage from this new method of treating diseases will prove a delusion. That delusion may, however, and in some cases, be of use while it lasts. There are in every great, rich city a number of persons, who are never in health, because they are fond of medicines, and always taking them, whereby they derange the natural functions, and hurt their constitution. If these people can be persuaded to forbear their drugs, in expectation of being cured by only the physician's finger, or an iron rod pointing at them, they may possibly find good effects, though they mistake the cause.* I have the honor to be, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

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* In March, 1784, Commissioners were appointed at the instance of the King of France for examining into the subject of animal magnetism, as practised by the followers of Mesmer. Five members were selected from the Royal Academy of Sciences, namely, Franklin, Le Roy, Bailly, De Bory, and Lavoisier. To these were joined Majault, Sallin, D'Arcet, and Guillotin, from the Faculty of Medicine. The Commissioners went through a long and detailed investigation, and presented an elaborate report on the 11th of August.

In writing to Dr. Ingenhousz some time afterwards on this subject, Dr. Franklin said; "Mesmer is still here, and has still some adherents and some practice. It is surprising how much credulity still subsists in the world. I suppose all the physicians in France put together have not made so much money, during the time he has been here, as he alone has done. And we have now a fresh folly. A magnetizer pretends, that he can, by establishing what is called a *rapport* between any person and a *somnambule*, put it in the power of that person to direct the actions of the *somnambule*, by a simple strong volition only, without speaking or making any signs; and many people daily flock to see this strange operation."

FROM RICHARD PRICE TO B. FRANKLIN.

The Royal Society. — Political Affairs in England. — Dr. Price's Design to write concerning the United States.

Newington-Green, 6 April, 1784.

My dear Friend,

I have been long intending to write to you, and I feel ashamed that I have not done it sooner. Your letter, which was brought to me by Mr. Bingham, gave me great pleasure. It enclosed a case for an air balloon, and a print, which, in conformity to your desire, I delivered to the President of the Royal Society. Soon after Mr. Bingham's arrival, Mr. Dagge brought me your paper on a mathematical prize question, proposed by the Royal Academy of B——. I conveyed this to Dr. Priestley, and we have been entertained with the pleasantry of it, and the ridicule it contains.

The discovery of air balloons seems to make the present time a new epoch, and the last year will, I suppose, be always distinguished as the year in which mankind began to fly in France. Nothing has yet been done here in this way of any consequence. In the Royal Society a great part of the winter has been employed in a manner very unworthy of philosophers. An opposition has been formed to the President. Motions for censuring him have been repeatedly made at our weekly meetings, and supported by Dr. Horsley, the Astronomer Royal, Mr. Maseres, Mr. Maty, and others. These motions have produced long and warm debates. Lately, there has been a suspension of these debates; but there is now some danger that they may be revived again, for Mr. Maty has just resigned his place of Secretary, in resentment.

In your letter you have intimated, that you then entertained some thoughts of visiting London in the spring. This is much wished for by your friends here, and particularly by the Club at the London Coffee House, which you have so often made happy by your company. Dr. Priestley intends coming to London from Birmingham in about a fortnight; but, could he reckon upon the pleasure of seeing you in London at any time, he would contrive to come up at that time. He has, I find, been chosen a member of the Royal Academy of Sciences at Paris. This is indeed a singular honor, and must give him particular pleasure.

Political affairs in this country are at present in great confusion. The King, after dismissing from his service the leaders of the late odious coalition, and appointing other ministers in their room, to the great joy of the kingdom, has at last found it necessary, in order to maintain the new ministers in power, and to carry on the public business, to dissolve the Parliament. We are, therefore, now in the midst of the heat and commotion of a general election; and such is the influence of government on elections, and also the present temper of the people, that probably the new ministers will have a great majority in their favor in the new Parliament.

The more wise and virtuous part of the nation are struggling hard to gain a Parliamentary reform, and think, with great reason, that, while the representation continues such a mockery as it is, no change of ministers can do us much good. But an equal representation is a blessing, which probably we shall never obtain till a convulsion comes, which will dissolve all government and give an opportunity for erecting a new frame.

In America, there is, I hope, an opening for a better

state of human affairs. Indeed, I look upon the revolution there, as one of the most important events in the history of the world. Wishing, for the sake of mankind, that the United States may improve properly the advantages of their situation, I have been lately employing myself in writing *sentiments of caution and advice*, which I mean to convey to them as a last offering of my good will. I know I am by no means qualified for such a work, nor can I expect that any advice I can give will carry much weight with it, or be much worth their acceptance. I cannot, however, satisfy my own mind without offering it, such as it is.* I always think of your friendship with particular satisfaction, and consider it as one of the honors and blessings of my life. You have attained an eminence of credit and usefulness in the world, to which few can aspire. That it may be continued, as long as the course of nature will allow, and that you may enjoy every comfort that can make you most happy, is, dear Sir, the sincere wish of yours most affectionately,

RICHARD PRICE.

TO JOHN WALTER.

On the Logographic Method of Printing.

Passy, 17 April, 1784.

SIR,

I have received a book, for which I understand I am obliged to you, the "Introduction to Logography." I have read it with attention, and, as far as I understand it, am much pleased with it. I do not perfectly

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* This design was carried into execution in a pamphlet entitled, "*Observations on the Importance of the American Revolution.*"

comprehend the arrangement of his cases; but the reduction of the number of pieces by the roots of words, and their different terminations, is extremely ingenious; and I like much the idea of cementing the letters, instead of casting words or syllables, which I formerly attempted, and succeeded in having invented a mould, and method by which I could in a few minutes, form a matrice, and adjust it, of any word in any fount at pleasure, and proceed to cast from it.

I send enclosed a specimen of some of my terminations, and would willingly instruct Mr. Johnson in the method if he desired it; but he has a better. He mentions some improvements that have been proposed, but takes no notice of one published here at Paris, in 1776; so I suppose he has neither seen nor heard of it. It is in a quarto pamphlet, entitled, "*Nouveau Système Typographique, ou Moyen de diminuer, de Moitié, dans toutes les Imprimeries de l'Europe, le Travail et les Frais de Composition, de Correction, de Distribution, découvert en* 1774, *par Madame de* * * *. Frustra fit per plura quod potest fieri per pauciora. *A Paris, de l'Imprimerie Royale*, MDCCLXXVI." It is dedicated to the King, who was at the expense of the experiments. Two commissaries were named to examine and render an account of them; they were M. Desmarets, of the Academy of Sciences, and M. Barbou, an eminent printer. Their report concludes thus; "Nous nous contenterons de dire ici, que M. de St. Paul a rempli les engagemens qu'il avoit contractés avec le Gouvernement; que ses expériences projetées ont été conduites avec beaucoup de méthode et d'intelligence de sa part; et que par des calculs longs et pénibles, qui sont le fruit d'un grand nombre de combinaisons raisonnées, il en a déduit plusieurs résultats qui méritent d'être proposés aux artistes, et qui nous paroissent

propres à éclairer la pratique de l'imprimerie actuelle, et à en abréger certainement les procédées. Son projet ne peut que gagner aux contradictions qu'il essuiera sans doute, de la part des gens de l'art. A Paris, le 8 Janvier, 1776." The pamphlet consists of sixty-six pages, containing a number of tables of words and parts of words, explanations of those tables, calculations, answers to objections, &c. I will endeavour to get one to send you if you desire it; mine is bound up with others in a volume.

It was after seeing this piece, that I cast the syllables I send you a sample of. I have not heard, that any of the printers here make at present the least use of the invention of Madame de * * *. You will observe, that it pretended only to lessen the work by one half; Mr. Johnson's method lessens it three fourths. I should be glad to know with what the letters are cemented. I think cementing better than casting them together, because if one letter happens to be battered, it may be taken away and another cemented in its place. I received no letter with the pamphlet.* I am, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

* The *logographic* method of printing was tried by a most diligent and laborious series of experiments, at an enormous expense, by Mr. Walter, who knew nothing of the art himself. Several works were printed, as was the newspaper called the *Times* originally, by that method. But it really failed; some little time was saved in the *compositors'* part, but it was lost in distribution. The casting was also triple the cost of single types; for, even for the logography, single letters were first cast with one half the shank of the letter shaped, in carpenters' language like a *tenon;* those were composed into words or parts of words, and put into a common matrix, so that the part resembling the *mortise* should be cast round them; when they were dressed like common types. It was an art travelling backward. The expense was enormous, and it failed. It was exactly the same method as that pursued in France. — DUANE.

TO BENJAMIN WEBB.

A new Method of repaying Money lent.

Passy, 22 April, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

I received yours of the 15th instant, and the memorial it enclosed. The account they give of your situation grieves me. I send you herewith a bill for ten louis d'ors. I do not pretend to *give* such a sum; I only *lend* it to you. When you shall return to your country with a good character, you cannot fail of getting into some business, that will in time enable you to pay all your debts. In that case, when you meet with another honest man in similar distress, you must pay me by lending this sum to him; enjoining him to discharge the debt by a like operation, when he shall be able, and shall meet with such another opportunity. I hope it may thus go through many hands, before it meets with a knave that will stop its progress. This is a trick of mine for doing a deal of good with a little money. I am not rich enough to afford *much* in good works, and so am obliged to be cunning and make the most of a *little*. With best wishes for the success of your memorial, and your future prosperity, I am, dear Sir, your most obedient servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO SAMUEL MATHER.

Cotton Mather. — Biographical Anecdotes.

Passy, 12 May, 1784.

REVEREND SIR,

I received your kind letter, with your excellent advice to the people of the United States, which I read

with great pleasure, and hope it will be duly regarded Such writings, though they may be lightly passed over by many readers, yet, if they make a deep impression on one active mind in a hundred, the effects may be considerable. Permit me to mention one little instance, which, though it relates to myself, will not be quite uninteresting to you. When I was a boy, I met with a book, entitled "*Essays to do Good*," which I think was written by your father.* It had been so little regarded by a former possessor, that several leaves of it were torn out; but the remainder gave me such a turn of thinking, as to have an influence on my conduct through life; for I have always set a greater value on the character of a *doer of good*, than on any other kind of reputation; and if I have been, as you seem to think, a useful citizen, the public owes the advantage of it to that book.

You mention your being in your seventy-eighth year; I am in my seventy-ninth; we are grown old together. It is now more than sixty years since I left Boston, but I remember well both your father and grandfather, having heard them both in the pulpit, and seen them in their houses. The last time I saw your father was in the beginning of 1724, when I visited him after my first trip to Pennsylvania. He received me in his library, and on my taking leave showed me a shorter way out of the house through a narrow passage, which was crossed by a beam over head. We were still talking as I withdrew, he accompanying me behind, and I turning partly towards him, when he said hastily, "*Stoop, stoop!*" I did not understand him, till I felt my head hit against the beam. He was a man that never missed any occasion of giving instruction, and upon this he

* Cotton Mather.

said to me, "*You are young, and have the world before you;* STOOP *as you go through it, and you will miss many hard thumps.*" This advice, thus beat into my head, has frequently been of use to me; and I often think of it, when I see pride mortified, and misfortunes brought upon people by their carrying their heads too high.

I long much to see again my native place, and to lay my bones there. I left it in 1723; I visited it in 1733, 1743, 1753, and 1763. In 1773 I was in England; in 1775 I had a sight of it, but could not enter, it being in possession of the enemy.* I did hope to have been there in 1783, but could not obtain my dismission from this employment here; and now I fear I shall never have that happiness. My best wishes however attend my dear country. *Esto perpetua.* It is now blest with an excellent constitution; may it last for ever!

This powerful monarchy continues its friendship for the United States. It is a friendship of the utmost importance to our security, and should be carefully cultivated. Britain has not yet well digested the loss of its dominion over us, and has still at times some flattering hopes of recovering it. Accidents may increase those hopes, and encourage dangerous attempts. A breach between us and France would infallibly bring the English again upon our backs; and yet we have some wild heads among our countrymen, who are endeavouring to weaken that connexion! Let us preserve our reputation by performing our engagements; our credit by fulfilling our contracts; and friends by gratitude and kindness; for we know not how soon

* In October, 1775, he went to the camp at Cambridge, as one of a committee from Congress to consult with General Washington respecting the affairs of the army then besieging Boston.

we may again have occasion for all of them. With great and sincere esteem, I have the honor to be, &c.

B. Franklin.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Commerce with the British and French Colonies.

Passy, 12 May, 1784.

Sir,

In my last I acquainted your Excellency, that Mr. Hartley was soon expected here to exchange ratifications of the definitive treaty. He is now arrived, and proposes to make the exchange this afternoon. I shall then be enabled to send a copy. Enclosed is the new British Proclamation respecting our trade with their colonies. It is said to be a temporary provision, till Parliament can assemble and make some proper regulating law, or till a commercial treaty shall be framed and agreed to. Mr. Hartley expects instructions for planning with us such a treaty. The ministry are supposed to have been too busy with the new elections, when he left London, to think of those matters.

This court has not completed its intended new system for the trade of their colonies, so that I cannot yet give a certain account of the advantages, that will in fine be allowed us. At present it is said we are to have two free ports, Tobago and the Mole, and that we may carry lumber and all sorts of provisions to the rest, except flour, which is reserved in favor of Bordeaux, and that we shall be permitted to export coffee, rum, molasses, and some sugar, for our own consumption.

We have had under consideration a commercial treaty proposed to us by the King of Prussia, and have sent it back with our remarks to Mr. Adams, who will,

I suppose, transmit it immediately to Congress. Those planned with Denmark and Portugal wait its determination.

Be pleased to present my dutiful respects to the Congress, and believe me to be, with sincere and great esteem, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

May 13th. I now enclose a copy of the ratification of the definitive treaty, on the part of his Britannic Majesty.

TO HENRY LAURENS.

Paris, 13 May, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

I am sorry for the numerous disappointments you have lately met with. The world, it is true, is full of disappointments, but they are not equally divided, and you have had more than your share.

The ratifications of the definitive treaty are now exchanged; but Mr. Hartley waits for instructions respecting a treaty of commerce, which, from what you observe, may probably never arrive. I shall, however, be glad to receive what you are so good as to promise me, your thoughts on the subject of such a treaty.

You have been so kind as to offer me your friendly services in America. You will oblige me greatly in forwarding my dismission from this employment, for I long much to be at home; and if you should think my grandson qualified to serve the States as secretary to my successor, or *Chargé d'Affaires*, till a successor arrives, I shall thank you for recommending him. His knowledge of this court, and acquaintance with the language, and the esteem the minister has for him, are

circumstances in his favor; his long experience in the business here is another, he having served an apprenticeship to it for more than seven years. His intelligence, discretion, and address, you can judge better of than myself, who may be partial. His fidelity and exactitude in performing his duty, I can answer for.

My best wishes attend you, your very valuable son, and amiable daughter. God bless you all, and give you a good voyage, and a happy meeting with your friends, with long life, health, and prosperity, is the sincere prayer of your affectionate humble servant,

B. Franklin.

TO CHARLES THOMSON, SECRETARY OF CONGRESS.

Ratification of the Definitive Treaty.

Passy, 13 May, 1784.

Dear Sir,

Yesterday evening Mr. Hartley met with Mr. Jay and myself, when the ratifications of the definitive treaty were exchanged. I send a copy of the English ratification to the President.

Thus the great and hazardous enterprise we have been engaged in, is, God be praised, happily completed; an event I hardly expected I should live to see. A few years of peace, well improved, will restore and increase our strength; but our future safety will depend on our union and our virtue. Britain will be long watching for advantages, to recover what she has lost. If we do not convince the world, that we are a nation to be depended on for fidelity in treaties; if we appear negligent in paying our debts, and ungrateful to those who have served and befriended us; our reputation, and all the strength it is capable of

procuring, will be lost, and fresh attacks upon us will be encouraged and promoted by better prospects of success. Let us therefore beware of being lulled into a dangerous security; and of being both enervated and impoverished by luxury; of being weakened by internal contentions and divisions; of being shamefully extravagant in contracting private debts, while we are backward in discharging honorably those of the public; of neglect in military exercises and discipline, and in providing stores of arms and munitions of war, to be ready on occasion; for all these are circumstances that give confidence to enemies, and diffidence to friends; and the expenses required to prevent a war are much lighter than those that will, if not prevented, be absolutely necessary to maintain it.

I am long kept in suspense without being able to learn the purpose of Congress respecting my request of recall, and that of some employment for my secretary, William Temple Franklin. If I am kept here another winter, and as much weakened by it as by the last, I may as well resolve to spend the remainder of my days here; for I shall hardly be able to bear the fatigues of the voyage in returning. During my long absence from America, my friends are continually diminishing by death, and my inducements to return lessened in proportion. But I can make no preparations either for going conveniently, or staying comfortably here, nor take any steps towards making some other provision for my grandson, till I know what I am to expect. Be so good, my dear friend, as to send me a little private information. With great esteem, I am ever yours, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO MR. AND MRS. JAY.

Passy, 13 May, 1784.

My dear Friends,

I find I shall not be able to see you again as I intended. My best wishes, however, go with you, that you may have a prosperous voyage and a happy sight of your friends and families.

Mr. Jay was so kind as to offer his friendly services to me in America. He will oblige me much by endeavouring to forward my discharge from this employment. Repose is now my only ambition. If too, he should think with me, that my grandson is qualified to serve the States as secretary to a future minister at this court, or as *Chargé d'Affaires*, and will be kind enough to recommend such an appointment, it will exceedingly oblige me. I have twice mentioned this in my letter to Congress, but have not been favored with any answer; which is hard, because the suspense prevents my endeavouring to promote him in some other way. I would not, however, be importunate; and therefore, if Mr. Jay should use his interest without effect, I will trouble them no more on the subject. My grandson's acquaintance with the language, with the court and customs here, and the particular regard M. de Vergennes has for him, are circumstances in his favor.

God bless and protect you both. Embrace my little friend for me, and believe me ever yours, &c.

B. Franklin.

FROM FRANCIS HOPKINSON TO B. FRANKLIN.

American Philosophical Society. — Defects in the usual Methods of teaching Languages. — Balloons.

Philadelphia, 24 May, 1784.

DEAR FRIEND,

I cannot suffer so good an opportunity to pass, without renewing my assurances of the love and respect I have for you, mine and my father's steady friend. It is, indeed, long since I have written to you, and much longer since I have received a letter from you. Your more serious and important avocations are doubtless the occasion of both. I am unwilling to intrude upon your time, and you are too much engaged in the embarrassing and vexatious duties of a public station and political character, to amuse yourself with letters of mere friendship and private concern.

I have long looked for the additional volumes of the new French *Encyclopédie*. You have forwarded three, namely, the first volumes of Jurisprudence, Natural History, and Mechanics; but I am told there are several more published.

I have industriously applied myself to raise from a state of lethargy our Philosophical Society. In this I have been assisted by the steady abilities of Mr. Rittenhouse, and the sanguine vivacity of Mr. Vaughan, whom you know. To this end I delivered a speech to the Society last winter, the purport of which was to rouse their attention to the objects of their institution, and to encourage a pursuit of experimental philosophy, by removing what I believed to be a great obstacle, especially in this country, that is, an idea that none but men of profound learning and scholastic education ought to meddle with pursuits of this kind. And this

I did, by asserting, that many of the most important discoveries had been made by men, who had not liberal educations, but were led to the discovery of truth by a careful attention to facts, and a steady investigation of the phenomena of nature.*

I asserted, that the book of nature was the book of knowledge; that it was open to all; that it was not written in Latin, Greek, or Hebrew, but in a language intelligible to every one, who would take the pains to read and observe. This gave offence to some of the learned faculty, who think it impossible to attain wisdom, but by means of grammar rules, a system of logic, and the whole fabric of metaphysics. Perhaps I carried my doctrine a little too far, but it was with a view to encourage those, who had not the means of a learned education, to become useful by experimental inquiries. I would send you a copy of this speech, if I thought it worth your attention. It had, however, some good effect.

I have long thought, that a great reform is wanting in the education of youth. Too much of the ancient superstitions of the schools remains. A great deal of precious time is spent in forcing upon young minds logical and metaphysical subtilties, which can never afterwards be applied to any possible use in life; whilst the practical branches of knowledge are either slightly glanced over, or totally neglected. Even the learned languages are in my opinion taught by a wrong method. The grammar should be the last book put into the learner's hands. No language is built upon its grammar, but the grammar is deduced from the language. Elegance of style in speaking or writing can

* See this Address in HOPKINSON's *Miscellaneous Essays and Occasional Writings*, Vol. I. p. 359.

never be acquired by rules. Conversing with men of a polished conversation, and reading books of approved composition, will insensibly lead the ear and the eye to an accurate judgment of propriety of diction; and the scholar will with great facility acquire a taste for elegance, which no system of rudiments can ever inculcate.

More of our knowledge is acquired by habit, than we are aware of. We attribute too much to the understanding. As to the translation of Latin words into English, a vocabulary, or dictionary, is the only possible resource; but the due arrangement of these words, so as to make them elegantly expressive, is more easily attained by the ear than any other method. After the scholar has made himself well acquainted with the use of Latin words, that is, can tell the English of any Latin word that occurs, I would wish that the teacher, not a common schoolmaster, but a gentleman of refined taste, should continually read to him out of the most approved authors, and cause the pupil to make little essays of his own. My objection to grammar is, that its rules are not founded in nature. In a living language they are ever fluctuating; general custom makes propriety; and even in languages called *dead*, and therefore *fixed*, the rules of grammar are necessarily encumbered with so many exceptions, that in many instances it is immaterial whether we take the exceptions to the rule, or the rule itself, for the standard.

But the learning of a language by means of a grammar is not only insufficient to inculcate its force and its elegances, but is a bar to the acquirement. We seldom see common schoolmasters, those haberdashers of moods and tenses, possessed of the least feeling or taste for the authors they teach; much less are they

able to write with urbanity in the language they profess. What would Virgil think, could he hear his beautiful poem frittered into its grammatical component parts in one of our schools? How would Horace swear, to hear one of his Odes *parsed*, as it is called, by mood and tense? All the spirit of elegance must evaporate under such an operation. But I have inadvertently fallen upon a subject, that would require long discussion and argument to set it in a proper light; let us leave it.*

I enclose, for your amusement, a little piece which I published with a view of having our streets better attended to. They had been much neglected during the war, and of course they became shamefully dirty. My performance fully answered my intention, and above one hundred scavengers were employed in two or three days after its appearance, and our streets are now kept tolerably clean. I will also, if I can get it, enclose another squib, in which I have endeavoured to ridicule *false* learning; but no great effect is to be expected from it, as rooted prejudices are not so easily shaken.

We have been diverting ourselves with raising paper balloons by means of burnt straw, to the great astonishment of the populace. This discovery, like electricity, magnetism, and many other important phenomena, serves for amusement at first; its uses and applications will hereafter unfold themselves. There may be many mechanical means of giving the balloon a progressive motion, other than what the current of wind would give it. Perhaps this is as simple as any. Let the balloon be constructed of an oblong form, some-

* Much more on the subject of education may be found in the *Miscellaneous Essays*, &c. Vol. I. p. 12; Vol. II. pp. 1, 41.

thing like the body of a fish, or of a bird, or a wherry, and let there be a large and light wheel in the stern, vertically mounted. This wheel should consist of many vanes or fans of canvass, whose planes should be considerably inclined with respect to the plane of its motion exactly like the wheel of a smoke-jack. If the navigator turns this wheel swiftly round by means of a winch, there is no doubt but it would (in a calm at least) give the machine a progressive motion, upon the same principle that a boat is *sculled* through the water.

But my paper is almost out, and perhaps your patience. If you can spare time, let me know that I live in your remembrance. Any philosophical communications will highly gratify me, and be thankfully received by our Society, who expect their president will now and then favor them with his notice. Are we to hope that you will revisit your native country or not; that country, for which you have done and suffered so much? Whilst there is any virtue left in America, the names of Franklin and Washington will be held in the highest esteem. Adieu, and be assured there is no one who loves you more, than your faithful and affectionate

FRANCIS HOPKINSON.

FROM DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

Defects of Form in ratifying the Treaty.

Paris, 1 June, 1784

SIR,

I have the honor to inform you, that I have transmitted to London the ratification on the part of Congress of the definitive treaty of peace between Great

Britain and the United States of America, and I am ordered to represent to you, that a want of form appears in the first paragraph of that instrument, wherein the United States are mentioned before his Majesty, contrary to the established custom in every treaty in which a crowned head and a republic are parties. It is likewise to be observed, that the term definitive *articles* is used instead of definitive *treaty*, and the conclusion appears likewise deficient, as it is neither signed by the President, nor is it dated, and consequently is wanting in some of the most essential points of form necessary towards authenticating the validity of the instrument.

I am ordered to propose to you, Sir, that these defects in the ratification should be corrected; which might very easily be done, either by signing a declaration in the name of Congress for preventing the particular mode of expression, so far as it relates to precedency in the first paragraph, being considered as a precedent to be adopted on any future occasion, or else by having a new copy made out in America, in which these mistakes should be corrected, and which might be done without any prejudice arising to either of the parties from the delay.* I am, Sir, with great respect and consideration, &c. D. HARTLEY.

* Lord Carmarthen had written as follows to Mr. Hartley.—"I received this morning the ratification of the treaty between Great Britain and the United States of America; and I own that it was with the greatest surprise, that I perceived so essential a want of form as appears in the very first paragraph of that instrument, wherein the United States are mentioned before his Majesty, contrary to the established custom observed in every treaty, in which a crowned head and a republic are contracting parties. The conclusion likewise appears extremely deficient, as it is neither signed by the President, nor is it dated, and consequently is wanting in some of the most essential points of form necessary towards authenticating the validity of the instrument." — *St. James's, May 28th*, 1784.

TO DAVID HARTLEY.

Answer to Mr. Hartley's Objections to the Form of the Ratification of the Treaty.

Passy, 2 June, 1784.

Sir,

I have considered the observations you did me the honor of communicating to me, concerning certain inaccuracies of expression, and supposed defects of formality, in the instrument of ratification, some of which are said to be of such a nature as to affect the validity of the instrument.

The first is, "that the United States are named before his Majesty, contrary to the established custom observed in every treaty in which a crowned head and a republic are the contracting parties." With respect to this, it seems to me we should distinguish between that act in which both join, to wit, the treaty, and that which is the act of each separately, the ratification. It is necessary, that all the modes of expression in the joint act should be agreed to by both parties, though in their separate acts each party is master of, and alone unaccountable for its own mode. And, on inspecting the treaty, it will be found that his Majesty is always regularly named before the United States. Thus "the established custom *in treaties* between crowned heads and republics," contended for on your part, is strictly observed; and the ratification following the treaty contains these words. "Now know ye, that we, the United States in Congress assembled, having seen and considered the definitive articles aforesaid, have *approved*, *ratified*, and *confirmed*, and by these presents do *approve*, *ratify*, and *confirm* the said articles, AND EVERY PART AND CLAUSE THEREOF," &c.

Hereby all those articles, parts, and clauses, wherein the King is named before the United States, are *approved, ratified,* and *confirmed,* and this solemnly, under the signature of the President of Congress, with the public seal affixed by their order, and countersigned by their Secretary.

No declaration on this subject more determinate or more authentic can possibly be made or given; which, when considered, may probably induce his Majesty's ministers to wave the proposition of our signing a similar declaration, or of sending back the ratification to be corrected in this point, neither appearing to be really necessary. I will, however, if it be still desired, transmit to Congress the observation, and the difficulty occasioned by it, and request their orders upon it. In the mean time I may venture to say, that I am confident there was no intention of affronting his Majesty by their order of nomination, but that it resulted merely from that sort of complaisance, which every nation seems to have for itself, and of that respect for its own government, customarily so expressed in its own acts, of which the English among the rest afford an instance, when in the title of the King they always name Great Britain before France.

The second objection is, "that the term definitive *articles* is used instead of definitive *treaty.*" If the words *definitive treaty* had been used in the ratification instead of *definitive articles,* it might have been more correct, though the difference seems not great nor of much importance, as in the treaty itself it is called "the present *definitive treaty.*"

The other objections are, "that the conclusion likewise appears deficient, as it is neither signed by the President, nor is it dated, and consequently is wanting in some of the most essential points of form necessary

towards authenticating the validity of the instrument." The situation of seals and signatures, in public instruments, differs in different countries, though all equally valid; for, when all the parts of an instrument are connected by a ribband, whose ends are secured under the impression of the seal, the signature and seal, wherever placed, are understood as relating to and authenticating the whole. Our usage is, to place them both together in the broad margin near the beginning of the piece; and so they stand in the present ratification, the concluding words of which declare the intention of such signing and sealing to be giving authenticity to the whole instrument, viz. "*In testimony* whereof, We have *caused* the seal of the United States to be hereunto affixed; Witness his Excellency Thomas Mifflin, Esquire, President;" and the date supposed to be omitted, perhaps from its not appearing in figures, is nevertheless to be found written in words at length, viz. "this fourteenth day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-four," which made the figures unnecessary. With great esteem and respect, I have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO THE COUNT DE CAMPOMANES.*

Franklin's Writings. — Power of an Individual to do Good. — Two erroneous Opinions injurious to national Felicity. — Hereditary Descents.

Passy, 5 June, 1784.

SIR,

I have received much instruction and pleasure in reading your excellent writings. I wish it were in my

* Campomanes was eminent as a scholar, a statesman, and a writer of enlarged and liberal ideas. He held various high offices at different

power to make you a suitable return of the same kind. I embrace the opportunity, my much esteemed friend, Mr. Carmichael, affords me, of sending you a late collection of some of my occasional pieces, of which, if I should live to get home, I hope to publish another edition much larger, more correct, and less unworthy your acceptance.*

You are engaged in a great work, reforming the ancient habitudes, removing the prejudices, and promoting the industry of your nation. You have in the Spanish people good stuff to work upon, and by a steady perseverance you will obtain perhaps a success beyond your expectation; for it is incredible the quantity of good that may be done in a country by a single man, who will *make a business* of it, and not suffer himself to be diverted from that purpose by different avocations, studies, or amusements.

There are two opinions prevalent in Europe, which have mischievous effects in diminishing national felicity; the one, that useful labor is dishonorable; the other, that families may be perpetuated with estates. In America we have neither of these prejudices, which is a great advantage to us. You will see our ideas

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times, and, among others, those of President of the Royal Academy of History, President of the Council of Castile, and Minister of State. Dr Robertson, speaking of some of his writings, says. "Almost every point of importance with respect to interior police, taxation, agriculture, manufactures, and trade, domestic as well as foreign, is examined in the course of these works; and there are not many authors, even in the nations most eminent for commercial knowledge, who have carried on their inquiries with a more thorough knowledge of those various subjects, and a more perfect freedom from vulgar and national prejudices, or who have united more happily the calm researches of philosophy with the ardent zeal of a public-spirited citizen. These books are in high estimation among the Spaniards; and it is a decisive evidence of the progress of their own ideas, that they are capable of relishing an author, whose sentiments are so liberal." — *History of America*, B. VIII.

* This design was never fulfilled.

respecting the first, in a little piece I send you, called *Information to those who would remove to America.** The second is mathematically demonstrable to be an impossibility under the present rules of law and religion. Since, though the estate may remain entire, the family is continually dividing. For a man's son is but half of his family, his grandson but a fourth, his great grandson but an eighth, the next but a sixteenth of his family; and, by the same progression, in only nine generations the present proprietor's part in the then possessor of the estate will be but a five hundred and twelfth, supposing the fidelity of all the succeeding wives equally certain with that of those now existing; too small a portion, methinks, to be anxious about, so as to oppose a legal liberty of breaking entails and dividing estates, which would contribute so much to the prosperity of the country. With great and sincere esteem and respect, and best wishes for the success of your patriotic undertaking, I have the honor to be, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Definitive Treaty ratified. — Jay and Laurens. — The Marquis de Lafayette.

Passy, 16 June, 1784.

SIR,

My letter by Mr. Jay acquainted your Excellency, that the ratifications of the definitive treaty were exchanged. A copy of the British part was also sent by him.

Mr. Hartley remained here expecting instructions to

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* See Vol. II. p. 467.

treat with us on the subject of commerce. The bustle attending a new election and meeting of Parliament, he imagined might occasion the long delay of those instructions. He now thinks, that, the affair of the American trade being under the consideration of Parliament, it is probable no treaty will be proposed till the result is known. Mr. Jay, who sailed for America the 1st instant from Dover, and who saw there several of our friends from London before his departure, and Mr. Laurens who left London the 6th to go on in the Falmouth packet, will be able to give you more perfect informations than I can, of what may be expected as the determination of the British government respecting our intercourse with their islands; and, therefore, I omit my conjectures, only mentioning, that from various circumstances there seems to be some lurking remains of ill humor there, and of resentment against us, which only wants a favorable opportunity to manifest itself.

This makes it more necessary for us to be upon our guard, and prepared for events, that a change in the affairs of Europe may produce; its tranquillity depending, perhaps, on the life of one man, and it being impossible to foresee in what situation a new arrangement of its various interests may place us. Ours will be respected in proportion to the apparent solidity of our government, the support of our credit, the maintenance of a good understanding with our friends, and our readiness for defence. All which I persuade myself will be taken care of.

Enclosed I send a copy of a letter from Mr. Hartley to me, respecting some supposed defects in the ratification, together with my answer, which he has transmitted to London. The objections appeared to me trivial and absurd; but I thought it prudent to treat

them with as much decency as I could, lest the ill temper should be augmented, which might be particularly inconvenient, while the commerce was under consideration. There has not yet been time for Mr. Hartley to hear whether my answer has been satisfactory, or whether the ministers will still insist on my sending for an amended copy from America, as they proposed.

I do not perceive the least diminution in the good disposition of this court towards us, and I hope care will be taken to preserve it.

The Marquis de Lafayette, who will have the honor of delivering this to you, has, ever since his arrival in Europe, been very industrious in his endeavours to serve us, and promote our interests, and has been of great use on several occasions. I should wish the Congress might think fit to express in some proper manner their sense of his merit.

My malady prevents my going to Versailles, as I cannot bear a carriage upon pavement; but my grandson goes regularly on court days to supply my place, and is well received there. The last letters I have had the honor of receiving from you, are of the 14th of January. With great respect, I am, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM THOMAS JEFFERSON TO B. FRANKLIN.*

Boston, 19 June, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

Supposing that Congress would communicate to you directly the powers committed to yourself, Mr. Adams,

* Mr. Jefferson was appointed by Congress, on the 7th of May, a commissioner to join Dr. Franklin and Mr. Adams in negotiating treaties of commerce with the European powers. He sailed from Boston on the 5th of July, and arrived in Paris on the 6th of August.

and myself, I have delayed from day to day the honor of writing to you, in hopes that every day would open to me a certainty of the time and place at which I might sail. A French packet will leave New York early in the next month. By her I mean to take my passage, and may therefore expect, in the ordinary course of things, to have the pleasure of joining you at Paris in the middle or latter part of August, and of communicating the commissions and instructions under which we are to act. The latter are more special, than those heretofore sent. I shall then also have the pleasure of giving you more particular information of the situation of our affairs, than I can do by letter; in general, I may observe to you, that their aspect is encouraging.

Congress, understanding that Mr. Jay was probably on his passage to America, appointed him their secretary for foreign affairs. It would give me peculiar pleasure to meet with him before my departure, and to know that he will act in an office with which we shall be so immediately connected. Congress adjourned on the 3d of June, to meet at Trenton on the first Monday of November, leaving a committee of the States at the helm during their recess.

I have the pleasure to inform you, that Mrs. Bache and her family were well when I left Philadelphia, which was about three weeks ago. In hopes of joining you nearly as soon as you will receive this letter, I subscribe myself, with very sincere esteem and regard, dear Sir, your most affectionate humble servant,

THOMAS JEFFERSON.

FROM WILLIAM CARMICHAEL TO B. FRANKLIN.

Madrid, 9 July, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

I arrived here on the 26th of June. My first business was to present myself at Aranjuez, where the court then resided. I had, in some measure, engaged before my departure from Spain to return before the regal family left that residence. So far I have fulfilled my engagements. On this account I set off from Paris more abruptly than I wished to do. I do not know as yet, whether I may not have given more offence to my personal friends there, by the precipitation with which I left them, than I have given satisfaction to my political ones here, by the desire which I have manifested to return agreeably to my promise. I have, however, the consolation to find, that I have been received individually in a manner that is highly flattering to me.

I have delayed writing to your Excellency, because I expected to have an answer to send you to the letter, which you wrote to the Count de Campomanes by me. I have the honor to inform you, that you are chosen a member of the Royal Academy of History here, and that I shall have the pleasure of enclosing you the diploma, and the answer of the Count de Campomanes to your Excellency's letter, by the next post. The little works you gave me will soon appear in a Spanish dress. If they lose by the change of costume, I can assure you that it will not be the fault of the translator, who wishes to preserve the true sense, spirit, and simplicity of the original.

In a few days, as I hope to have more leisure, I shall have the honor of writing to you more explicitly. You seem to be a prophet on more than one occasion, for I shall have an opportunity of suggesting an idea, that

you gave me with respect to China. In the mean time, I beg your Excellency to mention me in the proper manner to your grandson, and to all those who do me the honor to remember me, and to believe me, with the highest respect and the most sincere affection, &c.

WILLIAM CARMICHAEL.

FROM RICHARD PRICE TO B. FRANKLIN.

Dr. Price's Pamphlet on the American Revolution. Letter from M. Turgot.

Newington Green, 12 July, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

I request your acceptance of the pamphlet, which accompanies this letter.* It is intended entirely for America, and you are one of the first persons to whom it has been communicated. Most of the few copies, which I have printed, will be conveyed to America, and I hope the United States will forgive my presumption in supposing myself qualified to advise them. Indeed, I almost feel myself ashamed at what I have done; but the consciousness which I have, that it is well intended, and that my address to them is the effusion of a heart that wishes to serve the best interests of society, helps to reconcile me to myself in this instance, and it will, I hope, engage the candor of others.

The letter from M. Turgot, which you will receive with this, stands at present in the press, and will stand there till I shall be made acquainted with your opinion concerning the propriety of making it public, by conveying it to the United States with my own pamphlet. The reason of my doubts about this is the charge of

* Entitled, "*Observations on the Importance of the American Revolution.*"

secrecy with which it concludes, and which you will find written in the margin. In compliance with this charge, I have hitherto kept this letter private, but lately I have considered, that probably it was only some apprehension of personal inconvenience, that led him to give this charge, and that consequently the obligation to comply with it ceased with his life. Dreading, however, every thing that might be reckoned a breach of confidence, my scruples are continually returning upon me; and I feel them the more, when I think that possibly he may have left a family, which may suffer in France, when it appears there that he was so much a friend to liberty, as this letter will show him to have been.

In this state of mind, I cannot make myself easy in any other way, than by determining to request the favor of your judgment and to abide by it. Should you think, that no ill consequences can result, from publishing this letter, to any family that M. Turgot may have left, and that his death has freed me from any obligation to keep it secret, I will order it to be printed off, and send it to America with my pamphlet. Should you think the contrary, it shall be suppressed, and I shall depend on your being so good as to destroy the copy sent you. You will add much to the obligation I am under to you for all your friendship, by giving me a few lines on this subject as soon as may be convenient to you. Should you think it improper to write by the post, a letter or any parcel you may wish to convey to London, may be sent by Miss Wilkes, who is on a visit with the Duchess de la Vallière at Paris, and will return by the 2d of August.*

I wrote to you by the post about three months ago,

* M. Turgot's letter was published, and appended to Dr. Price's pamphlet.

and hope you received my letter. I have heard lately with pleasure, that you are pretty well. May your health, and life, and usefulness be continued as long as the course of nature will admit. Are we never to have the satisfaction of seeing you again in London? I have lately been at Birmingham, to visit Dr. Priestley. He is very happy there, and going on successfully with his experiments.

Mrs. Price desires to be respectfully remembered to you. She is in a very weak and low state, but not worse than she has been for some time. We are thinking of spending the next month at Brighthelmston. Wishing you every blessing, I am, my dear friend, with the greatest regard, ever yours,

RICHARD PRICE.

TO THOMAS PERCIVAL.

Remarks on Duelling.

Passy, 17 July, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

I received yesterday, by Mr. White, your kind letter of May 11th, with the most agreeable present of your new book.* I read it before I slept, which is a proof of the good effects your happy manner has of drawing your reader on, by mixing little anecdotes and historical facts with your instructions. Be pleased to accept my grateful acknowledgments for the pleasure it has afforded me.

It is astonishing that the murderous practice of duelling, which you so justly condemn, should continue so long in vogue. Formerly, when duels were used to determine lawsuits, from an opinion that Providence

* Moral and Literary Dissertations, 2d edition. — W. T. F.

would in every instance favor truth and right with victory, they were excusable. At present, they decide nothing. A man says something, which another tells him is a lie. They fight; but, whichever is killed, the point at dispute remains unsettled. To this purpose they have a pleasant little story here. A gentleman in a coffee-house desired another to sit further from him. "Why so?" "Because, Sir, you stink." "That is an affront, and you must fight me." "I will fight you, if you insist upon it; but I do not see how that will mend the matter. For if you kill me, I shall stink too; and if I kill you, you will stink, if possible, worse than you do at present." How can such miserable sinners as we are entertain so much pride, as to conceit that every offence against our imagined honor merits *death?* These petty princes in their own opinion would call that sovereign a tyrant, who should put one of them to death for a little uncivil language, though pointed at his sacred person; yet every one of them makes himself judge in his own cause, condemns the offender without a jury, and undertakes himself to be the executioner. With sincere and great esteem, I have the honor to be, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. Our friend, Mr. Vaughan, may perhaps communicate to you some conjectures of mine relating to the cold of last winter, which I sent to him in return for the observations on cold of Professor Wilson. If he should, and you think them worthy so much notice, you may show them to your Philosophical Society,* to which I wish all imaginable success. Their rules appear to me excellent.

* The *Philosophical Society of Manchester*, of which Dr. Percival was one of the principal founders and ornaments. — W. T. F.

TO MESSRS. WEEMS AND GANT, CITIZENS OF THE UNITED STATES IN LONDON.

Ordination of American Clergymen of the Episcopal Church.

Passy, 18 July, 1784.

GENTLEMEN,

On receipt of your letter, acquainting me that the Archbishop of Canterbury would not permit you to be ordained, unless you took the oath of allegiance, I applied to a clergyman of my acquaintance for information on the subject of your obtaining ordination here. His opinion was, that it could not be done; and that, if it were done, you would be required to vow obedience to the Archbishop of Paris. I next inquired of the Pope's Nuncio, whether you might not be ordained by their Bishop in America, powers being sent him for that purpose, if he has them not already. The answer was, "The thing is impossible, unless the gentlemen become Catholics."

This is an affair of which I know very little, and therefore I may ask questions and propose means that are improper or impracticable. But what is the necessity of your being connected with the Church of England? Would it not be as well, if you were of the Church of Ireland? The religion is the same, though there is a different set of bishops and archbishops. Perhaps if you were to apply to the Bishop of Derry, who is a man of liberal sentiments, he might give you orders as of that Church. If both Britain and Ireland refuse you, (and I am not sure that the Bishops of Denmark or Sweden would ordain you, unless you become Lutherans,) what is then to be done? Next to becoming Presbyterians, the Episco-

palian clergy of America, in my humble opinion, cannot do better than to follow the example of the first clergy of Scotland, soon after the conversion of that country to Christianity. When their King had built the Cathedral of St. Andrew's, and requested the King of Northumberland to lend his bishops to ordain one for them, that their clergy might not as heretofore be obliged to go to Northumberland for orders, and their request was refused; they assembled in the Cathedral; and, the mitre, crosier, and robes of a bishop being laid upon the altar, they, after earnest prayers for direction in their choice, elected one of their own number; when the King said to him, "*Arise, go to the altar, and receive your office at the hand of God.*" His brethren led him to the altar, robed him, put the crozier in his hand, and the mitre on his head, and he became the first Bishop of Scotland.

If the British Islands were sunk in the sea (and the surface of this globe has suffered greater changes), you would probably take some such method as this; and, if they persist in denying you ordination, it is the same thing. A hundred years hence, when people are more enlightened, it will be wondered at, that men in America, qualified by their learning and piety to pray for and instruct their neighbours, should not be permitted to do it till they had made a voyage of six thousand miles out and home, to ask leave of a cross old gentleman at Canterbury; who seems, by your account, to have as little regard for the souls of the people of Maryland, as King William's Attorney-General, Seymour, had for those of Virginia. The Reverend Commissary Blair, who projected the College of that Province, and was in England to solicit benefactions and a charter, relates, that, the Queen, in the King's absence, having ordered Seymour to draw up the charter,

which was to be given, with two thousand pounds in money, he opposed the grant; saying that the nation was engaged in an expensive war, that the money was wanted for better purposes, and he did not see the least occasion for a college in Virginia. Blair represented to him, that its intention was to educate and qualify young men to be ministers of the Gospel, much wanted there; and begged Mr. Attorney would consider, that the people of Virginia had souls to be saved, as well as the people of England. "*Souls!*" said he, "*damn your souls. Make tobacco.*" I have the honor to be, Gentlemen, &c.

B. Franklin.

TO BENJAMIN VAUGHAN.

Restraints on Commerce. — Cook's Voyages. — Dr. Price's Pamphlet. — Luxury.

Passy, 26 July, 1784.

Dear Friend,

I have received several letters from you lately, dated June 16th, June 30th, and July 13th. I thank you for the information respecting the proceedings of your West India merchants, or rather planters. The restraints, whatever they may be upon our commerce with your Islands, will prejudice their inhabitants, I apprehend, more than us.

I have received Cook's *Voyages*, which you put Mr. Oswald in the way of sending to me. By some mistake the first volume was omitted, and instead of it a duplicate sent of the third. If there is a good print of Cook, I should be glad to have it, being personally acquainted with him. I thank you for the pamphlets by Mr. Estlin. Every thing you send me gives me

pleasure; to receive your account would give me more than all.

I am told, that the little pamphlet of *Advice to such as would remove to America*,* is reprinted in London, with my name to it, which I would rather had been omitted; but wish to see a copy, when you have an opportunity of sending it.

Mr. Hartley has long continued here in expectation of instructions for making a treaty of commerce, but they do not come, and I begin to supect none are intended; though perhaps the delay is only occasioned by the over great burden of business at present on the shoulders of your ministers. We do not press the matter, but are content to wait till they can see their interest respecting America more clearly, being certain that we can shift as well as you without a treaty.

The conjectures I sent you concerning the cold of last winter still appear to me probable. The moderate season in Russia and Canada, does not weaken them. I think our frost here began about the 24th of December; in America, the 12th of January. I thank you for recommending to me Mr. Arbuthnot; I have had pleasure in his conversation. I wish much to see the new pieces you had in hand. I congratulate you on the return of your wedding-day, and wish for your sake and Mrs. Vaughan's, that you may see a great many of them, all as happy as the first.

I like the young stranger very much. He seems sensible, ingenious, and modest, has a good deal of instruction, and makes judicious remarks. He will probably distinguish himself advantageously. I have not yet heard from Mr. Nairne.

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* See Vol. II. p. 467.

Dr. Price's pamphlet of advice to America is a good one, and will do good. You ask, "what remedy I have for the growing luxury of my country, which gives so much *offence* to all *English travellers* without exception." I answer, that I think it exaggerated, and that travellers are no good judges whether our luxury is growing or diminishing. Our people are hospitable, and have indeed too much pride in displaying upon their tables before strangers the plenty and variety that our country affords. They have the vanity, too, of sometimes borrowing one another's plate to entertain more splendidly. Strangers being invited from house to house, and meeting every day with a feast, imagine what they see is the ordinary way of living of all the families where they dine; when perhaps each family lives a week afterwards upon the remains of the dinder given. It is, I own, a folly in our people to give *such offence* to *English travellers*. The first part of the proverb is thereby verified, that *fools make feasts*. I wish in this case the other were as true, *and wise men eat them*. These travellers might, one would think, find some fault they could more decently reproach us with, than that of our excessive civility to them as strangers.

By the by, here is just issued an *arrêt* of Council taking off all the duties upon the exportation of brandies, which, it is said, will render them cheaper in America than your rum; in which case there is no doubt but they will be preferred, and we shall be better able to bear your restrictions on our commerce. There are views here, by augmenting their settlements, of being able to supply the growing people of America with the sugar that may be wanted there. On the whole, I believe England will get as little by the com-

mercial war she has begun with us, as she did by the military.* Adieu, my dear friend. I am yours ever,

B. Franklin.

P. S. This will be delivered to you by my grandson. I am persuaded you will afford him your civilities and counsels. Please to accept a little present of books, I send by him, curious for the beauty of the impression.

FROM COUNT DE CAMPOMANES TO B. FRANKLIN.

Remarks on Dr. Franklin's Writings. — His Discoveries. — Laws in Spain. — Royal Academy of History.

Translation.

Madrid, 26 July, 1784.

Sir,

I have received, by the hands of my friend Mr. Carmichael, your estimable letter of the 5th of June, the collection of your miscellaneous writings, and the piece entitled, *Information to those who would remove to America.*† All these writings exhibit proofs of their having proceeded from a statesman, endowed with foresight, and vigilant for the best interests of his country, according to the political combinations and systems of government under which they were composed; and they manifest, at the same time, an ardent desire for the general happiness of mankind, founded on principles and calculations carried to as high a degree of demonstration, as the vicissitude and inconsistency of

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* A large portion of this letter is here omitted, which has usually been printed as a separate article, *On Luxury, Idleness, and Industry* See Vol. II. p. 448.

† See Vol. II. p. 467.

the various systems adopted for the government of men will admit. Your views and reflections show the solidity and permanence of your principles, whether considered as applicable to the American colonies in their former condition, or in that of independent States. In both cases your efforts have been directed to the general good, without running into those extremes, which are apt to lead astray weak minds in so long and arduous a contest, as we have seen in America, for the establishment of a new State consisting of thirteen provinces under different constitutions, and, at last, united in a bond of union for the mutual benefit of each other.

Nature, which you have profoundly studied, is indebted to you for investigating and explaining phenomena, which wise men had not before been able to understand; and the great American philosopher, at the same time he discovers these phenomena, suggests useful methods for guarding men against their dangers.

The frankness, with which you dissuade people in Europe from emigrating inconsiderately to America, is a proof of your general philanthropy, and of a candor peculiar to a good man, true philosopher, and genuine patriot. You extend this same benevolence to Spain, in your remarks respecting the honor that is due to labor, and against the entailment of estates The former is now confirmed among us by a recent law, a copy of which I send herewith, declaring the honorable light in which every description of artisans should be regarded. Laborers were always honored and favored by our laws. As to what regards entailments, I refer you to what I wrote in the year 1765, at the end of my treatise upon *Mortmain*, in which I think I have demonstrated, that another regulation ought to precede this in the progress of legislation. I

add also, that there is some diversity of circumstances between a monarchical and democratical constitution in this respect.

I should have great pleasure in extending these reflections, if time would permit, although your penetration and sagacity would render them unnecessary. The honor conferred upon me by the American Philosophical Society, in electing me a member on the 16th of January, lays me under the pleasing obligation of expressing my gratitude through you, the worthy President of the Society. Desirous of reciprocating in some manner this act of courtesy, I proposed you as an honorary member of the Royal Academy of History, of which I am President. The proposal was responded to by universal acclamation; the Academy feeling in the highest degree honored by having on its list the name of a man so eminent in the world of letters, and so distinguished for the part he has acted in a Revolution, the most memorable in the history of modern times. I am, &c.

COUNT DE CAMPOMANES.

FROM BENJAMIN HARRISON, GOVERNOR OF VIRGINIA, TO B. FRANKLIN.

Requesting him to engage an Artist for executing a Statue of General Washington.

Richmond, 27 July, 1784.

SIR,

The Assembly of this State have voted a statue of our late worthy Commander-in-chief, General Washington, and have directed one side of the pedestal to be filled with an inscription; the other three, with the dress, are left for the exercise of the genius of your

humble servant and his Council; who are all too little acquainted with a business, that requires such a refinement of genius and taste, to venture any thing of their own to the eyes of the critical world.

It was natural, therefore, for us to look round for the assistance of some of our own friends; and we unanimously pitched on yourself and Mr. Jefferson, as the most likely to come up to our wishes and the expectations of the Assembly. The friendship you have honored me with gave me the confidence to assure the gentlemen, that they might depend on your complying with the request, and I am sure you will not disappoint me. I have written fully to Mr. Jefferson on the subject, enclosed to him a copy of the resolution of the Assembly, and ordered Mr. Peale to send to his address a full length picture of the General, and have requested the favor of him to confer with you on the whole of this business.

I have had the pleasure of several of your recommendations, and have on every occasion paid that attention to them you had so good a right to expect. If in this or any other way I can be of use to you, you will please to command me; for be assured nothing will make me happier, than to have it in my power to render you service. I have the honor to be, with the most perfect respect and esteem, dear Sir, &c.

BENJAMIN HARRISON.*

* M Houdon was the artist selected for executing the Statue, which was placed in the State House at Richmond. See SPARKS's *Life of Washington*, p. 390; and also his edition of *Washington's Writings*, Vol. IX. pp. 131, 132.

TO COUNT DE MERCY ARGENTEAU.*

Passy, 30 July, 1784.

SIR,

I have the honor to communicate to your Excellency an extract from the instructions of Congress to their late Commissioners for treating of peace, expressing their desire to cultivate the friendship of his Imperial Majesty, and to enter into a treaty of commerce for the mutual advantage of his subjects and the citizens of the United States, which I request you will be pleased to lay before his Majesty. The appointing and instructing Commissioners for treaties of commerce with the powers of Europe generally has, by various circumstances, been long delayed, but is now done; and I have just received advice, that Mr. Jefferson, late Governor of Virginia, commissioned with Mr. Adams, our minister in Holland, and myself, for that service, is on his way hither, and may be expected by the end of August, when we shall be ready to enter into a treaty with his Imperial Majesty for the above purpose, if such should be his pleasure. With great and sincere respect, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM COUNT DE MERCY ARGENTEAU TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

Paris, 30 July, 1784.

SIR,

I have received the letter you did me the honor to write to me this morning, and I shall lose no time to transmit the contents to my court.

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* Austrian Ambassador at the Court of Versailles.

The sentiments of the Emperor towards the United States of America make me foresee the satisfaction, which his Majesty will have to enter into reciprocal, suitable, and advantageous connexions with them. I have not the least doubt, but that measures will be instantly taken on this subject to concert with you, Sir, and with the appointed Ministers Plenipotentiary; and, as soon as the answer from my court shall come, I shall instantly communicate it to you. I have the honor to be, &c.

DE MERCY ARGENTEAU.

TO MESSRS. SEARS AND SMITH.

Duty on Slaves imported into the French Islands.

Passy, 4 August, 1784.

GENTLEMEN,

Upon the receipt of yours relating to your cargo of slaves at Martinico, I endeavoured to inform myself what was the law in such cases; and I found, that by an *arrêt du Conseil d'Etat du Roi*, of the 28th of June, 1783, there is a duty laid, of one hundred livres per head, on all negroes imported in foreign ships, and this duty is granted and is to be paid as a premium to the French importers of negroes, as an encouragement to their own African trade. Under these circumstances I am advised, that it cannot be expected that a general national law should be set aside in favor of a particular foreign ship; especially as the King, if he forgives the duty to the stranger, must thereby do injustice to his own subjects, to whom he had promised the produce of that duty, unless he pays it to them out of his own money, which we cannot decently request him to do. I do not, therefore, see any

possibility of your avoiding payment. I have the honor to be, Gentlemen, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO MRS. MARY HEWSON.

Invites her to come to Paris.

Passy, 15 August, 1784.

DEAR FRIEND,

I received your kind letter of July 20th. I wish you had executed your project of taking a little trip to see me this summer. You would have made me very happy, and might have bathed your children here, as well as at Southampton, I having a bath in my house, besides the river in view. I like your monthly account of them, and in return send you my daughter's account of my grandchildren in Philadelphia. You will see she expected me home this summer; but my constituents have sent me a new commission, and I must stay another winter. Can you not come and pass it with me here?

Temple, who proposes to have the pleasure of delivering this to you, will explain to you how you may be accommodated, and, if you can resolve to come, will conduct you. Except being at home, which I begin now to fear I never shall be, nothing could give me greater pleasure. Come, my dear friend, live with me while I stay here, and go with me, if I do go, to America. Yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. My love to the dear children, particularly my godson, for whom Temple has a little present of French books.

TO WILLIAM FRANKLIN.

Passy, 16 August, 1784.

Dear Son,

I received your letter of the 22d ultimo, and am glad to find that you desire to revive the affectionate intercourse, that formerly existed between us. It will be very agreeable to me; indeed, nothing has ever hurt me so much, and affected me with such keen sensations, as to find myself deserted in my old age by my only son; and not only deserted, but to find him taking up arms against me in a cause, wherein my good fame, fortune, and life were all at stake. You conceived, you say, that your duty to your King and regard for your country required this. I ought not to blame you for differing in sentiment with me in public affairs. We are men, all subject to errors. Our opinions are not in our own power; they are formed and governed much by circumstances, that are often as inexplicable as they are irresistible. Your situation was such that few would have censured your remaining neuter, though there are natural duties which precede political ones, and cannot be extinguished by them.

This is a disagreeable subject. I drop it; and we will endeavour, as you propose, mutually to forget what has happened relating to it, as well as we can. I send your son over to pay his duty to you. You will find him much improved. He is greatly esteemed and beloved in this country, and will make his way anywhere. It is my desire, that he should study the law, as the necessary part of knowledge for a public man, and profitable if he should have occasion to practise it. I would have you therefore put into his hands those law-books you have, viz. Blackstone, Coke, Ba

con, Viner, &c. He will inform you, that he received the letter sent him by Mr. Galloway, and the paper it enclosed, safe.

On my leaving America, I deposited with that friend for you, a chest of papers, among which was a manuscript of nine or ten volumes, relating to manufactures, commerce, and finance, which cost me in England about seventy guineas; and eight quire books, containing the rough drafts of all my letters while I lived in London. These are missing; I hope you have got them; if not, they are lost. Mr. Vaughan has published in London a volume of what he calls my political works. He proposes a second edition; but, as the first was very incomplete, and you had many things that were omitted, (for I used to send you sometimes the rough drafts, and sometimes the printed pieces I wrote in London,) I have directed him to apply to you for what may be in your power to furnish him with, or to delay his publication till I can be at home again, if that may ever happen.

I did intend returning this year; but the Congress, instead of giving me leave to do so, have sent me another commission, which will keep me here at least a year longer; and perhaps I may then be too old and feeble to bear the voyage. I am here among a people that love and respect me, a most amiable nation to live with; and perhaps I may conclude to die among them; for my friends in America are dying off, one after another, and I have been so long abroad, that I should now be almost a stranger in my own country.

I shall be glad to see you when convenient, but would not have you come here at present. You may confide to your son the family affairs you wished to confer upon with me, for he is discreet; and I trust,

that you will prudently avoid introducing him to company, that it may be improper for him to be seen with. I shall hear from you by him; and letters to me afterwards will come safe under cover directed to Mr. Ferdinand Grand, banker, at Paris. Wishing you health, and more happiness than it seems you have lately experienced, I remain your affectionate father,

B. Franklin.

TO RICHARD PRICE.

Balloons. — English Constitution. — State of America.

Passy, 16 August, 1784.

Dear Friend,

I some time since answered your kind letter of July 12th, returning the proof of Mr. Turgot's letter, with the permission of his friends to print it. I hope it came safe to hand. I had before received yours of April, which gave me great pleasure, as it acquainted me with your welfare, and that of Dr. Priestley.

The commencement here of the art of flying will, as you observe, be a new epoch. The construction and manner of filling the balloons improve daily. Some of the artists have lately gone to England. It will be well for your philosophers to obtain from them what they know, or you will be behindhand; which in mechanic operations is unusual for Englishmen.

I hope the disagreements in our Royal Society are composed. Quarrels often disgrace both sides; and disputes even on small matters often produce quarrels for want of knowing how to differ decently; an art which it is said scarce anybody possesses but yourself and Dr. Priestley.

I had indeed thoughts of visiting England once

more, and of enjoying the great pleasure of seeing again my friends there; but my malady, otherwise tolerable, is I find irritated by the motion in a carriage, and I fear the consequence of such a journey; yet I am not quite resolved against it. I often think of the agreeable evenings I used to pass with that excellent collection of good men, the club at the *London*, and wish to be again among them. Perhaps I may pop in some Thursday evening when they least expect me. You may well believe it very pleasing to me to have Dr. Priestley associated with me among the foreign members of the Academy of Sciences. I had mentioned him upon every vacancy, that has happened since my residence here, and the place has never been bestowed more worthily.

When you wrote the letter I am now answering, your nation was involved in the confusion of your new election. When I think of your present crazy constitution and its diseases, I imagine the enormous emoluments of place to be among the greatest; and, while they exist, I doubt whether even the reform of your representation will cure the evils constantly arising from your perpetual factions. As it seems to be a settled point at present, that the minister must govern the Parliament, who are to do every thing he would have done; and he is to bribe them to do this, and the people are to furnish the money to pay these bribes; the Parliament appears to me a very expensive machine for government, and I apprehend the people will find out in time, that they may as well be governed, and that it will be much cheaper to be governed, by the minister alone; no Parliament being preferable to the present.

Your newspapers are full of fictitious accounts of distractions in America. We know nothing of them

Mr. Jefferson, just arrived here, after a journey through all the States from Virginia to Boston, assures me, that all is quiet, a general tranquillity reigns, and the people well satisfied with their present forms of government, a few insignificant persons only excepted. These accounts are I suppose intended as consolatory, and to discourage emigrations. I think with you, that our Revolution is an important event for the advantage of mankind in general. It is to be hoped that the lights we enjoy, which the ancient governments in their first establishment could not have, may preserve us from their errors. In this the advice of wise friends may do much good, and I am sure that which you have been so kind as to offer us will be of great service.

Mr. Jay has gone to America; but Mr. Adams is just arrived here, and I shall acquaint him with your remembrance of him. Many thanks for your kind wishes respecting my health and happiness, which I return fourfold, being ever with the sincerest esteem, my dear friend, your most affectionate

B. FRANKLIN.

TO LORD HOWE.

On receiving a Copy of Cook's Voyages by Order of the King.

Passy, 18 August, 1784.

MY LORD,

I received lately the very valuable *Voyage* of the late Captain Cook, kindly sent to me by your Lordship in consideration of my good-will in issuing orders towards the protection of that illustrious discoverer from any interruption in his return home by American cruisers.*

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* See Vol. V. p. 123.

The reward vastly exceeds the small merit of the action, which was no more than a duty to mankind. I am very sensible of his Majesty's goodness in permitting this favor to me, and I desire that my thankful acknowledgments may be accepted. With great respect, I am, my Lord, your Lordship's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.*

TO WILLIAM STRAHAN.

Invites him to Passy. — Annihilation of profitable Places. — American Congress and British Parliament. — The late War. — Emigration.

Passy, 19 August, 1784.

DEAR FRIEND,

I received your kind letter of April 17th. You will have the goodness to place my delay in answering to the account of indisposition and business, and excuse it. I have now that letter before me; and my grandson, whom you may formerly remember a little scholar at Mr. Elphinston's, purposing to set out in a day or two on a visit to his father in London, I sit down to scribble a little to you, first recommending him as a worthy young man to your civilities and counsels.

You press me much to come to England. I am not without strong inducements to do so; the fund of knowledge you promise to communicate to me is an addition to them, and no small one. At present it is

* A gold medal was struck by order of the Royal Society, with particular reference to the protection afforded to Captain Cook's vessels by the Emperor of Russia and the King of France. The Society bestowed upon Dr. Franklin a compliment similar to the King's, by presenting to him one of these medals.

impracticable. But, when my grandson returns, come with him. We will talk the matter over, and perhaps you may take me back with you. I have a bed at your service, and will try to make your residence, while you can stay with us, as agreeable to you, if possible, as I am sure it will be to me.

You do not "approve the annihilation of profitable places; for you do not see why a statesman, who does his business well, should not be paid for his labor as well as any other workman." Agreed. But why more than any other workman? The less the salary the greater the honor. In so great a nation, there are many rich enough to afford giving their time to the public; and there are, I make no doubt, many wise and able men, who would take as much pleasure in governing for nothing, as they do in playing chess for nothing. It would be one of the noblest amusements. That this opinion is not chimerical, the country I now live in affords a proof; its whole civil and criminal law administration being done for nothing, or in some sense for less than nothing; since the members of its judiciary parliaments buy their places, and do not make more than *three per cent* for their money by their fees and emoluments, while the legal interest is *five;* so that in fact they give two per cent to be allowed to govern, and all their time and trouble into the bargain. Thus *profit*, one motive for desiring place, being abolished, there remains only *ambition;* and that being in some degree balanced by *loss*, you may easily conceive, that there will not be very violent factions and contentions for such places, nor much of the mischief to the country, that attends your factions, which have often occasioned wars, and overloaded you with debts impayable.

I allow you all the force of your joke upon the

vagrancy of our Congress. They have a right to sit *where* they please, of which perhaps they have made too much use by shifting too often. But they have two other rights; those of sitting *when* they please, and as *long* as they please, in which methinks they have the advantage of your Parliament; for they cannot be dissolved by the breath of a minister, or sent packing as you were the other day, when it was your earnest desire to have remained longer together.

You "fairly acknowledge, that the late war terminated quite contrary to your expectation." Your expectation was ill founded; for you would not believe your old friend, who told you repeatedly, that by those measures England would lose her colonies, as Epictetus warned in vain his master that he would break his leg. You believed rather the tales you heard of our poltroonery and impotence of body and mind. Do you not remember the story you told me of the Scotch sergeant, who met with a party of forty American soldiers, and, though alone, disarmed them all, and brought them in prisoners? A story almost as improbable as that of the Irishman, who pretended to have alone taken and brought in five of the enemy by *surrounding* them. And yet, my friend, sensible and judicious as you are, but partaking of the general infatuation, you seemed to believe it.

The word *general* puts me in mind of a general, your General Clarke, who had the folly to say in my hearing at Sir John Pringle's, that, with a thousand British grenadiers, he would undertake to go from one end of America to the other, and geld all the males, partly by force and partly by a little coaxing. It is plain he took us for a species of animals very little superior to brutes. The Parliament too believed the stories of another foolish general, I forget his name,

that the Yankeys never *felt bold.* Yankey was understood to be a sort of Yahoo, and the Parliament did not think the petitions of such creatures were fit to be received and read in so wise an assembly. What was the consequence of this monstrous pride and insolence? You first sent small armies to subdue us, believing them more than sufficient, but soon found yourselves obliged to send greater; these, whenever they ventured to penetrate our country beyond the protection of their ships, were either repulsed and obliged to scamper out, or were surrounded, beaten, and taken prisoners. An American planter, who had never seen Europe, was chosen by us to command our troops, and continued during the whole war. This man sent home to you, one after another, five of your best generals baffled, their heads bare of laurels, disgraced even in the opinion of their employers.

Your contempt of our understandings, in comparison with your own, appeared to be not much better founded than that of our courage, if we may judge by this circumstance, that, in whatever court of Europe a Yankey negotiator appeared, the wise British minister was routed, put in a passion, picked a quarrel with your friends, and was sent home with a flea in his ear.

But after all, my dear friend, do not imagine that I am vain enough to ascribe our success to any superiority in any of those points. I am too well acquainted with all the springs and levers of our machine, not to see, that our human means were unequal to our undertaking, and that, if it had not been for the justice of our cause, and the consequent interposition of Providence, in which we had faith, we must have been ruined. If I had ever before been an atheist, I should now have been convinced of the being and government of a Deity! It is he who abases the proud

and favors the humble. May we never forget his goodness to us, and may our future conduct manifest our gratitude.

But let us leave these serious reflections and converse with our usual pleasantry. I remember your observing once to me as we sat together in the House of Commons, that no two journeymen printers, within your knowledge, had met with such success in the world as ourselves. You were then at the head of your profession, and soon afterwards became a member of Parliament. I was an agent for a few provinces, and now act for them all. But we have risen by different modes. I, as a republican printer, always liked a form well *planed down;* being averse to those *overbearing* letters that hold their heads so *high*, as to hinder their neighbours from appearing. You, as a monarchist, chose to work upon *crown* paper, and found it profitable; while I worked upon *pro patria* (often indeed called *foolscap*) with no less advantage. Both our *heaps hold out* very well, and we seem likely to make a pretty good day's work of it. With regard to public affairs (to continue in the same style), it seems to me that the compositors in your chapel do not *cast off their copy* well, nor perfectly understand *imposing;* their *forms*, too, are continually pestered by the *outs* and *doubles*, that are not easy to be corrected. And I think they were wrong in laying aside some *faces*, and particularly certain *head-pieces*, that would have been both useful and ornamental. But, courage! The business may still flourish with good management; and the master become as rich as any of the company.

By the way, the rapid growth and extension of the English language in America, must become greatly advantageous to the booksellers, and holders of copyrights in England. A vast audience is assembling there

for English authors, ancient, present, and future, our people doubling every twenty years; and this will demand large and of course profitable impressions of your most valuable books. I would, therefore, if I possessed such rights, entail them, if such a thing be practicable, upon my posterity; for their worth will be continually augmenting. This may look a little like advice, and yet I have drunk no *madeira* these six months.

The subject, however, leads me to another thought, which is, that you do wrong to discourage the emigration of Englishmen to America. In my piece on population, I have proved, I think, that emigration does not diminish but multiplies a nation. You will not have fewer at home for those that go abroad; and as every man who comes among us, and takes up a piece of land, becomes a citizen, and by our constitution has a voice in elections, and a share in the government of the country, why should you be against acquiring by this fair means a repossession of it, and leave it to be taken by foreigners of all nations and languages, who by their numbers may drown and stifle the English, which otherwise would probably become in the course of two centuries the most extensive language in the world, the Spanish only excepted? It is a fact, that the Irish emigrants and their children are now in possession of the government of Pennsylvania, by their majority in the Assembly, as well as of a great part of the territory; and I remember well the first ship that brought any of them over. I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. Franklin.

TO GEORGE WHATLEY.

Tract on the Principles of Trade. — Foundling Hospital. — Double Spectacles.

Passy, 21 August, 1784.

My dear old Friend,

I received your kind letter of May 3d, 1783. I am ashamed that it has been so long unanswered. The indolence of old age, frequent indisposition, and too much business are my only excuses. I had great pleasure in reading it, as it informed me of your welfare.

Your excellent little work, *The Principles of Trade*, is too little known.* I wish you would send me a copy of it by the return of my grandson and secretary, whom I beg leave to recommend to your civilities. I would get it translated and printed here. And if your bookseller has any quantity of them left, I should be glad he would send them to America. The ideas of our people there, though rather better than those that prevail in Europe, are not so good as they should be; and that piece might be of service among them.

Since and soon after the date of your letter, we lost unaccountably, as well as unfortunately, that worthy, valuable young man you mention, your namesake, Maddison. He was infinitely regretted by all that knew him.

I am sorry your favorite charity† does not go on as you could wish it. It is shrunk indeed by your admitting only sixty children a year. What you have told your brethren respecting America is true. If you find it difficult to dispose of your children in Eng-

* See Vol. II. p. 383.

† The Foundling Hospital, of which Mr. Whatley was the Treasurer.

land, it looks as if you had too many people. And yet you are afraid of emigration. A subscription is lately set on foot here to encourage and assist mothers in nursing their infants themselves at home; the practice of sending them to the *Enfants trouvés* having risen here to a monstrous excess, as, by the annual bill, it appears they amount to near one third of the children born in Paris! The subscription is likely to succeed, and may do a great deal of good, though it cannot answer all the purposes of a foundling hospital.

Your eyes must continue very good, since you can write so small a hand without spectacles. I cannot distinguish a letter even of large print; but am happy in the invention of double spectacles, which, serving for distant objects as well as near ones, make my eyes as useful to me as ever they were. If all the other defects and infirmities were as easily and cheaply remedied, it would be worth while for friends to live a good deal longer, but I look upon death to be as necessary to our constitution as sleep. We shall rise refreshed in the morning. Adieu, and believe me ever yours most affectionately,

B. Franklin.

TO A FRIEND IN ENGLAND.*

General Melvill. — Profession of Faith. — The Old Testament.

Passy, 21 August, 1784

Dear Sir,

Understanding that my letter intended for you by General Melvill, was lost at the Hôtel d'Espagne, I

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* Supposed to be Dr. Priestley.

take this opportunity by my grandson to give you the purport of it, as well as I can recollect. I thanked you for the pleasure you had procured me of the General's conversation, whom I found a judicious, sensible, and amiable man. I was glad to hear that you possessed a comfortable retirement, and more so that you had thoughts of removing to Philadelphia, for that it would make me very happy to have you there. Your *companions* would be very acceptable to the Library, but I hoped you would long live to enjoy their company yourself. I agreed with you in sentiments concerning the Old Testament, and thought the clause in our constitution, which required the members of Assembly to declare their belief, *that the whole of it was given by divine inspiration*, had better have been omitted. That I had opposed the clause; but, being overpowered by numbers, and fearing more might in future times be grafted on it, I prevailed to have the additional clause, "that *no further or more extended profession of faith should ever be exacted.*" I observed to you too, that the evil of it was the less, as *no inhabitant*, nor any officer of government, except the members of Assembly, was obliged to make that declaration.

So much for that letter; to which I may now add, that there are several things in the Old Testament, impossible to be given by *divine* inspiration; such as the approbation ascribed to the angel of the Lord, of that abominably wicked and detestable action of Jael, the wife of Heber, the Kenite.* If the rest of the book were like that, I should rather suppose it given by inspiration from another quarter, and renounce the whole.

* Judges, chap. iv.

By the way, how goes on the Unitarian church in Essex Street? And the honest minister of it,* is he comfortably supported? Your old colleague, Mr. Radcliff, is he living? And what became of Mr. Denham?

My grandson, who will have the honor of delivering this to you, may bring me a line from you; and I hope will bring me an account of your continuing well and happy.

I jog on still, with as much health, and as few of the infirmities of old age, as I have any reason to expect. But, notwithstanding the decay of my constitution, my regard for my old friends remains firm and entire. You will always have a good share of it, for I am ever with great and sincere esteem, dear Sir, &c.

B. Franklin.

From James M'Henry to B. Franklin.†

The Marquis de Lafayette. — The Adjournment of Congress, and Dissolution of the Committee of the States.

Baltimore, 24 August, 1784.

Sir,

As it may be a satisfaction to the friends of the Marquis de Lafayette to learn, that his visit to this country has been extremely flattering to its citizens, and that his reception has been marked by every circumstance expressive of gratitude and respect, I thought it would give pleasure to you, of whom I have often heard him express the liveliest regard, to have it in

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* Theophilus Lindsey.

† Mr. M'Henry was at this time a delegate in Congress from Maryland. He afterwards served for several years as Secretary of War, during the administrations of Washington and Adams.

your power to convey to them this information. He is now with our late general at Mount Vernon, and is expected in this town about the first of next month.*

I imagine your official information from this country must be very imperfect, and may continue so for some time, unless Mr. Jay, who has arrived, accepts the Department of Foreign Affairs. You know, I suppose, that Congress left a committee of the States; but this committee is, in effect, at an end, without the form of an adjournment. I went down to Annapolis on the 20th instant, to relieve Mr. Chase (a delegate from this State), but I might as well have remained at home, for Mr. Dana and Mr. Blanchard had the day before signified their intention to return to their States. There being only nine members present, a motion was made by General Hand to fix the dissolution on those gentlemen, which would have been entered on the journals, had not Mr. Blanchard withdrawn just as the yeas and nays were about to be called. This put an end to the committee, as he did not choose to return.

Owing to this circumstance, we shall have no visible federal sovereignty before the meeting of Congress at Trenton. I dare say our enemies in Europe will construe this event into a proof of a spirit of disorder and disunion among the States, not distinguishing between the States and their fluctuating representatives, who cannot be always wise, always moderate men. The truth is, the eastern delegates did not think a committee of the States necessary, and went into it merely because, that, without one, they could not have obtained the adjournment to Trenton. The passions and sentiments of Congress descending to the com-

* The Marquis de Lafayette had been making a tour through various parts of the United States, and was now about to return to Europe — See Sparks's edition of *Washington's Writings*, Vol. IX. pp. 55, 74, 77.

mittee terminated in its dissolution, as might have been foreseen. The States, however, have been at no time in greater harmony with each other. North Carolina has adopted the five per cent impost. Several of them have passed acts to vest Congress with a power to regulate commerce, previous to our recommendation on that subject, while Rhode Island alone resists the impost.

Your name has been often of late mentioned in Congress, and your letters alluded to, in which you press for leave to retire; but your friends have as often hoped, that you would serve this country a little longer. We have made treaties, but we want to be certain that we are at peace. With the greatest respect, I have the honor to be, Sir, &c.

JAMES McHENRY.

FROM THE COUNT DE VERGENNES TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

Versailles, 27 August, 1784.

SIR,

You have communicated to me an extract from the instructions, which Congress addressed to you on the 11th of May last, which imports, that the United States will in no case treat any other nation with respect to commerce more advantageously than the French. This disposition is much the wisest, as it will prevent those misunderstandings, which might arise from the equivocal terms in whi h the 2d article of the Treaty of Amity and Commerce, signed February 6th, 1778, is conceived. But that the resolution of Congress on this subject may be clearly stated, it would be best, Sir, that you furnish me with it in the form of a declaration, or at least in an official note, signed by your-

self. I have no doubt that you will adopt one of these two forms. I have the honor to be, &c.

DE VERGENNES.

TO COUNT DE VERGENNES.

Passy, 3 September, 1784.

SIR,

I have the honor to transmit to your Excellency, by order of Congress, a resolution of theirs, dated the 11th of May last, which is in the words following, viz.

"*Resolved*, That Dr. Franklin be instructed to express to the court of France, the constant desire of Congress to meet their wishes; that these States are about to form a general system of commerce, by treaties with other nations; that, at this time, they cannot foresee what claim might be given to those nations by the explanatory propositions from the Count de Vergennes, on the second and third articles of our Treaty of Amity and Commerce with His Most Christian Majesty, but that he may be assured it will be our constant care to place no people on more advantageous ground than the subjects of his Majesty."

With great respect, I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO BENJAMIN VAUGHAN.

Introducing Count Mirabeau.

Passy, 7 September, 1784.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

This will be delivered to you by Count Mirabeau;* son of the Marquis of that name, author of *L'Ami des*

* The same who afterwards so eminently distinguished himself by his eloquence in the early part of the French Revolution. — W. T. F.

Hommes. This gentleman is esteemed here, and I recommend him to your civilities and counsels, particularly with respect to the printing of a piece he has written on the subject of *hereditary nobility*, on occasion of the order of Cincinnati lately attempted to be established in America, which cannot be printed here. I find that some of the best judges think it extremely well written, with great clearness, force, and elegance. If you can recommend him to an honest, reasonable bookseller, that will undertake it, you will do him service, and perhaps some to mankind, who are too much bigoted in many countries to that kind of imposition.

I had formerly almost resolved to trouble you with no more letters of recommendation; but I think you will find this gentleman to possess talents, that may render his acquaintance agreeable. With sincere esteem, I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

FROM COUNT DE VERGENNES TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

Versailles, 9 September, 1784.

SIR,

I have received the letter which you did me the honor to write me on the 3d instant. You there declare in the name of Congress, that the United States will be careful not to treat any other nation, in matters of commerce, more advantageously than the French nation. This declaration, founded on the treaty of the 6th of February, 1778, has been very agreeable to the King; and you, Sir, can assure Congress, that the United States shall constantly experience a perfect reciprocity in France. I have the honor to be, very sincerely, Sir, &c. DE VERGENNES.

FROM WILLIAM CARMICHAEL TO B. FRANKLIN.

Appointment of M. Gardoqui as Minister from Spain to the United States. — Count de Galvez.

Madrid, 25 September, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

Since I had the honor to answer your Excellency's letter of the 28th ultimo, from St. Ildefonso, this court has judged proper to adopt a measure, which it has had in contemplation for some time past, by finally concluding to send M. Gardoqui, late consul-general in England, to represent His Catholic Majesty in the character of *Chargé d'Affaires* to the United States; with a commission, however, of minister, in case, previous to his arrival or immediately after, Congress shall think fit to name a person in that character here to replace Mr. Jay. Accordingly his appointments are those of minister, his salary being twelve thousand hard dollars, with two thousand pistoles for his outfits. This gentleman is to embark before the middle of next month from Cadiz, on board a Spanish frigate ready for that purpose, the King defraying every expense of himself and suite on their passage.

On finding that this gentleman's mission would take place sooner than I expected, I took occasion to mention, though not officially, to the Count de Florida Blanca, the nature of the new commission appointed to treat with the European powers, mentioned in your letter abovementioned. Finding that he did not appear altogether satisfied with this mode of negotiating, I endeavoured to convince him, that the measure had been adopted by Congress for the convenience of the European courts inclined to treat with the States.

I have the honor to inform you of these circum-

stances, as it is proper they should be known to Messrs. Adams and Jefferson, from whom I have not had the pleasure of hearing since their arrival at Paris; and I beg leave to solicit your and their advice for my government, having been deprived of every kind of information from Congress, since the 7th of May, 1783. M. Gardoqui is known to Mr. Adams and your Excellency, and is principally chosen by the court from a supposition, that he will be agreeable in America, from his known affection to the country and his attachment to its interest. He is a very well meaning man, and very sincerely disposed to promote and cultivate a lasting harmony between this country and ours. The choice of him, therefore, for this mission, may be considered as a proof of the good disposition of the court; which, though hurt by the silence of Congress, has manifested much attention to the objects relative to the interests of individuals of America, for which I have had occasion to have recourse to its interference.

Having no precise information of the nature of the services rendered by the *South Carolina* frigate, or of the sum expected for those services, I shall make it a point to procure instruction for M. Gardoqui to settle that business in America, which can be done with more despatch there than in Europe, because the Count de Galvez, now on his way to Havana, was commander-in-chief when that frigate was employed, and must be consulted from hence before any step can be taken definitely satisfactory to the State of South Carolina. Not to omit any thing that may terminate this matter to the satisfaction of the State, I shall write on the subject to the Count de Galvez, whom I have the honor to know personally, and endeavour to dispose him to render all the good offices, that may depend

on him, in the arrangement of this affair.* With very respectful compliments to Messrs. Adams and Jefferson, I have the honor to be, with high regard and much esteem, &c.

WILLIAM CARMICHAEL.

FROM COUNT DE MERCY ARGENTEAU TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

Passy, 28 September, 1784.

SIR,

With respect to the proposition of the United States of America, that I forwarded to my court, concerning the arrangements of commerce to be adopted by the respective dominions, I have received the order, Sir, which I have the honor to communicate to you, that his Majesty, the Emperor, has agreed to the said proposition, and that he has directed the government general of the Low Countries to adopt measures to put it in execution.

When the particulars respecting this matter shall be sent to me, I shall instantly communicate them.

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* The *South Carolina* frigate was the same that was commanded by Commodore Gillon, as heretofore mentioned. See Vol. IX. p. 54. Gillon sailed from Corunna to Teneriffe, where he remained some time, and then pursued his course for Charleston; but, while on his way, he fell in with and captured five English vessels from Jamaica laden with rum and sugar. Being blown off the coast when he approached Charleston, he took his prizes to Havana, where they were sold. The Spaniards at this time having fitted out an expedition against the English in the West Indies, Gillon joined them with his frigate, and they made a successful descent upon the Bahama Islands. For the service of the frigate in this expedition the State of South Carolina claimed an indemnity, and the American *Chargé d'Affaires* at the court of Madrid was instructed by Congress to present and support the claim. See *Journals of Congress, May 3d*, 1784.

I avail myself of this opportunity to renew the assurances of the most perfect attachment, with which I have the honor to be, &c.

De Mercy Argenteau.

FROM ROBERT MORRIS TO B. FRANKLIN.

Settlement of the Public Accounts. — Contingent Fund.

Office of Finance, 30 September, 1784.

Dear Sir,

This is rather a late day to acknowledge your favors of the 25th of December and 15th of June last, but I have always intended in my acknowledgment of them to close our public correspondence, and I have always been disappointed in my expectation of being able speedily to quit this office. That period, however, so ardently desired, is at length nearly arrived, and, while I look back at the cares and dangers past, I feel an increased emotion of joy by a comparison with future hopes and expectations. But I cannot view the past scene without strong feelings of gratitude and respect for the able and active efforts you have made to support the finances of this country. I would to God, that your just sentiments on property and taxation were as fully felt as they must be clearly understood in America; but time is necessary to mellow the judgment of a country as well as of a man. Happy indeed shall we be, if it produce that effect among us.

I am much obliged by your explanation of M. Chaumont's accounts. These, as well as the other accounts, are lodged at the treasury, which is the most proper place for both. If any insinuations have been made injurious to you, in connexion with Chaumont, they have not reached me, and I am persuaded that none

such can make any impressions, which ought to give you pain.

I have not remitted bills for the salaries of the foreign ministers, because, the resolutions of Congress having varied, and Mr. Grand having informed me that he should pay them, I have left it as an account unsettled, to be arranged by Mr. Barclay; and, as I cannot doubt that the attachments will have been taken off, and as I have given Mr. Grand a credit on the commissioners of the loan in Holland for four hundred thousand livres, and directed Messrs. Le Couteulx to pay over to him a balance in their hands, I have no doubt that he will be in cash for the purpose. I agree with you, that a fund ought to be set apart for contingencies, and, had I continued and been supported in administration, such a fund should certainly have been provided. I am at the same time an enemy to contingent accounts, and therefore I should have urged the ascertainment of every allowance, as far as possible, thereby curtailing the account of contingencies; but, after all, it cannot be annihilated. Congress have made no determination on this subject. Indeed, it is very difficult, and even almost disreputable for them to make arrangements of expenditure, while the means of expenditure are so shamefully withheld by their constituents. These things, however, will mend; at least I hope so.

I have already said, that I expected the attachments laid on the public goods would be discharged. Your letter to the Count de Vergennes on that subject is perfect; and, if that minister did not immediately obtain a compliance with your request, I presume it must have been occasioned by some circumstances purely domestic, which we in this country cannot guess at; for certainly nothing can be more astonishing, than to

find a subject countenanced in arresting the property of a sovereign power in this enlightened age, and in the country which of all others has been most eminent for a sacred regard to the rights of nations.

From your last letters to your friends, I find that your return to this country is somewhat doubtful. I am therefore disappointed in one of the great pleasures which I had promised myself. But, Sir, in whatever country you may be, and whether in public or in private life, be assured of my warmest and most respectful esteem, and that my best wishes for your happiness shall be clothed with the utmost efforts in my power to promote it on every proper occasion. I am, with sincere regard, &c.

ROBERT MORRIS

TO CHARLES THOMSON.

Passy, 16 October, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

It was intended by the Commissioners to write a joint letter to Congress, but I am afraid the opportunity may be missed. This may serve to inform you, that propositions of treating have been made by us to all the powers of Europe according to our instructions, and we are waiting for their answers. There are apprehensions here of a war between the Emperor and Holland; but, as the season is not proper for opening a campaign, I hope the winter will give time for mediators to accommodate matters. We have not yet heard that Mr. Jay has accepted the secretaryship of foreign affairs. I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM RICHARD PRICE TO B. FRANKLIN.

Sinking Fund. — Balloons.

Newington Green, 21 October, 1784.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have promised to draw up a table, during the next session of Parliament, similar to the first in the French edict, and marking, as that does, distinctly for every year the progress of a sinking fund, in order to show its powers; and I have some reason to expect, that there will be a struggle in our Parliament to get such a fund established, and consigned to the care of commissioners in order to render diversions of it less practicable. I have enclosed a little pamphlet, published in April last, because I am doubtful whether it has been sent to you before.

We have at last begun to fly here. Such an ardor prevails, that probably we shall soon, in this instance, leave France behind us. Dr. Priestley, in a letter which I have just received from him, tells me, that he is eager in pursuing his experiments, and that he has discovered a method of filling the largest balloons with the lightest inflammable air in a very short time and at a very small expense.

I sent you a pretty long letter, with a parcel of my pamphlets on the American Revolution, about a fortnight ago. This letter will be conveyed by a countryman of yours, Mr. Jonathan Jackson, who has been in London some time, and in whose acquaintance I have been happy. I have sent a considerable number of these pamphlets to America, where I hope they will be favorably received, as a well-meant, though weak attempt to serve the best interests of civil society.

Mrs. Price, I thank God, continues better; she de-

sires to be respectfully remembered to you. With the highest regard, I am ever yours,

RICHARD PRICE.

TO CHARLES THOMSON.

Passy, 11 November, 1784.

DEAR FRIEND,

I received your kind letter of August 13th with the papers annexed, relative to the affair of Longchamps. I hope satisfaction will be given to M. Marbois. The Commissioners have written a joint letter to Congress. This serves to cover a few papers relative to matters with which I was particularly charged in the instructions. I shall write to you fully by the next opportunity, having now only time to add, that I am, as ever, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. I executed the instructions of October 29th, 1783, as soon as I knew the commissions for treating with the Emperor, &c. were issued, which was not till July, 1784. The three letters between the Emperor's minister and me are what passed on that occasion.

FROM GEORGE WHATLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

Principles of Trade. — Foundling Hospitals. — Spectacles. — Powers of Congress. — Toleration.

London, 15 November, 1784.

MY GOOD OLD FRIEND,

You flatter my vanity in thinking of having a translation made of *The Principles of Trade.* I have given

to your grandson one of them, and I shall with pleasure send some copies to America.

I should be glad to know what the success may be of the new institution at Paris for assisting women, so as to suckle their own children at home. I approve of it much; though I hold as an axiom, "that the children of poor or dishonest persons should be taken care of by the public *in time*, lest, instead of serving, they come to hurt the public either through distress or bad education, if it can be done without any violence to the natural right of the parent, as it is better to make men good than to hang those that are bad." You see the voluntary sending of children to the foundling hospital takes away the thought of any violence to the natural right; and to my mind, from whatever cause parents may divest themselves of their affection for their offspring, so as to put them away, it is the duty of the public to intervene and take up such offspring, upon the certain principle, that the number of subjects makes the riches of a State.

By good luck, I find I have kept your original notes on the *Principles of Trade*, those we agreed in, those I added, and those I dissented from, and were not published; moreover, some other ideas you favored me with. This I told your grandson, and wished to confer with him thereon, as well for his improvement, as to convey to you what we differed in, for your reconsideration. I have prepared copies of those notes, and shall hope to collate them with your grandson. If not so done, you may depend I have faithfully copied them.

Death is a concomitant of our existence. Your doctrine of our rising from it, or after it, refreshed in the morning, is what I do not comprehend. I have long contemplated the epitaph, thought to be written by the

celebrated Mr. Pope, which allow me to send you, together with my paraphrase, if it may be so called.

"Under this marble, or under this sill,
Or under this turf, or e'en what they will;
Whatever an heir, or a friend in his stead,
Or any good creature, shall lay o'er my head,
Lies one who ne'er cared, and still cares not a pin
What they said, or may say, of the mortal within;
But who, living and dying, serene, still, and free,
Trusts in God, that, as well as he was, he shall be."

When we have considered things, and weighed them to the utmost extent of our faculties, we shall not, I apprehend, be able to say more, than that we can know nothing of what we were before we existed, nor can we more certainly or more positively say what shall become of us on our dissolution. It is therefore submitted, whether it be not greatly satisfactory to contemplate, and to trust in God, *that what we were, we shall be.* It is presumed, the utmost of all religion must be *the trusting in God;* consequently, this idea seems not to militate against pure religion. As to the almost infinite notions of mankind, by which the minds of men are warped and bent, they will be found mere nothings, if from them we take, as Dean Swift says of what is called the happiness of mortal men, their false lights, varnish, and tinsel.

By way of speculation, I trouble you with a copy of an account I got from Paris of the number of foundling children there, received from 1741, the year of our beginning here, to the year 1755. I think it was obtained preparatory to the opening of our hospital, the 2d of June, 1756, for a general reception, to show what was done abroad. I should be glad if you could procure the subsequent years to 1783 inclusive. Whether it may be of any use, I know not; nevertheless, it would please me to have it.

I have spoken to Dolland about your invention of double spectacles, and, by all I can gather, they can only serve for particular eyes, not in general. Dolland was to furnish me *gratis* with spectacles, thirty years ago, in virtue of my disinterested purchases of telescopes, for no small sums, for conjurers abroad. He has now done it, as I find spectacles are of use; though I can do without them tolerably, and part of this letter was wrote so. They, as I said, give ease, and that is what we ought to covet and desire.

I long much to learn how the Philadelphia bank goes on. If your people will be pleased to let justice be the compass by which they shall steer, they may do any thing. I think I can prove this to be for their true interest, in every shape. You know I lay down as a maxim, that interest should govern as well public as private affairs. It is all a farce to pretend, that it ought not. I hold your Cincinnati institution to be wrong, nor do I think those to blame, who are against giving a power to Congress inconsistent with liberty; for men are not to be trusted with power but with a jealous eye, and so guarded that nought but the general interest shall be the rule of action. If poor States in union with others cannot, by reason of their small means, acquiesce in measures judged to be for public benefit so readily as the richer, these should assist and help out those who are poor, either by loan or gift. I will suppose all readiness in both rich and poor to do their utmost; for, if that be wanting, there is a clear want of justice, and consequently a deviation from the true interest of the whole.

I think the Abbé Raynal in some of his writings has said, "Establish no legal preference amongst the different forms of worship. Superstition is innocent, whenever it is neither persecuted nor protected." Whether

such a principle can be brought into practice is doubtful; I fear it cannot. I full well remember what you told me long ago, of a place in Philadelphia built for whosoever might choose to talk in public, as some persons of a particular denomination had been refused holding forth, because they were of a certain color. How this doctrine may be relished in other parts, I know not; but, if mass has been said in Boston, I will hope there has been some relaxation, at least, in favor of the general interest of the State.

Your grandson, upon my insinuating to him you were so desirably situated as not to leave Paris, tells me, you thought you would be more pleased and happy in America, where you might prosecute your philosophical studies. All I can say to this is, what I have read somewhere; "Happy only is he, who in mind lives contented; and he most of all unhappy, whom nothing that he hath can content." I am sure you cannot have more health, happiness, and contentment, than I sincerely wish you; and I shall ever be happy in having opportunities of showing with what respect and regard I am, dear Sir, your very affectionate friend, GEORGE WHATLEY.

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON.

Passy, 23 November, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

These people are so accustomed to see every thing done by solicitation of interest, or what they call protection, and nothing without it, that they hardly conceive it possible to obtain the payment even of a just debt, but by means of persons whom they suppose to have influence enough to support and enforce their

pretensions. We should naturally suppose, that the proper time for asking such aid would be after a regular demand, and a refusal of justice; but they run about to everybody with their memorials, before they have even presented their account to those whom they consider as their debtors. Thus the creditors, not only of a State in America, but even of private merchants, tease the ministers of this country, as well as those of America here, with their petitions and cases, requesting assistance and interest to procure attention to their affairs, when it does not appear that their claims have been refused, or even made where they ought to be made.

I beg leave to refer you to the enclosed papers, and to request, that, if you are acquainted with the affair, and can give any comfortable expectation or counsel to the poor man, you would be so good as to furnish me with it, that I may communicate it to him in my answer. With great and sincere esteem, I am, Sir, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

FROM JOHN JAY TO B. FRANKLIN.

The Marquis de Lafayette. — Congress.

Trenton, 13 December, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

The Marquis de Lafayette is so obliging as to take charge of this letter. He has seen much of our country since his arrival, and, having had many opportunities of knowing our true situation, will be able to give you full information on the subject. I think he is, and has reason to be, convinced, that the attachment of America to him has not been abated by the peace, and that we are *now* as little disposed to break friend-

ship with France, as we were during the war. This is a most favorable season for her to relax the severe commercial restrictions, which oppose our trade to her islands. Her liberality would be contrasted to British ill humor, and unavoidably produce correspondent impressions.

The present Congress promises well. There are many respectable members here. Federal ideas seem to prevail greatly among them, and I may add, a strong disposition to conciliation and unanimity. Your letter on the subject of leave to return, is, with a variety of foreign papers, referred to a committee. They have as yet made no report, and therefore I can give you no satisfactory intelligence on that head.

I lately saw Mrs. Bache in good health and spirits, at Philadelphia, and I am persuaded she is no less anxious for your return than you can be. Mrs. Jay and our little family are at Elizabethtown, and her last letters inform me they are all well. Be pleased to make my compliments to your grandsons. I am, dear Sir, &c. JOHN JAY.

TO DAVID HARTLEY.

Passy, 3 January, 1785.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I received your kind letter of December 1st, from Bath. I am glad to hear that your good sister is in a fair way towards recovery; my respects and best wishes attend her.

I communicated your letter to Mr. Jefferson, to remind him of his promise to communicate to you the intelligence he might receive from America on the subjects you mention; and now, having got back, I shall endeavour to answer the other parts of it.

What you propose to draw up of your opinions on American negotiation, may be of great use, if laid, as you intend, before administration, in case they seriously intend to enter on it after the meeting of Parliament; for I know your ideas all tend to a good understanding between the two countries and their common advantage; and in my mind, too, all selfish projects of partial profit are the effects of short-sightedness, they never producing permanent benefits, and are at length the causes of discord and its consequences, wherein much more is spent than all the temporary gains amounted to.

I do not know that any one is yet appointed by your court to treat with us. We some time since acquainted your minister with our powers and disposition to treat, which he communicated to his court, and received for answer, that his Majesty's ministers were ready to receive any propositions we might have to make for the common benefit of both countries, but they thought it more for the honor of both, that the treaty should not be in a third place. We answered, that, though we did not see much inconvenience in treating here, we would, as soon as we had finished some affairs at present on our hands, wait upon them, if they pleased, in London. We have since heard nothing.

We have no late accounts from America of any importance. You know the Congress adjourned the beginning of June till the beginning of November. And since their meeting there has been no account of their proceedings. All the stories in your papers relating to their divisions are fiction, as well as those of the people being discontented with Congressional government. Mr. Jay writes to me, that they were at no time more happy or more satisfied with their govern-

ment, than at present, nor ever enjoyed more tranquillity or prosperity. In truth, the freedom of their ports to all nations has brought in a vast plenty of foreign goods, and occasioned a demand for their produce, the consequence of which is the double advantage of buying what they consume cheap, and selling what they can spare dear.

If we should come to London, I hope it may still be with you that we are to do business. Our already understanding one another may save, on many points, a good deal of time in discussion. But I doubt whether any treaty is intended on your part, and I fancy we shall not press it. It may perhaps be best to give both sides time to inquire, and to *feel* for the interests they cannot *see*. With sincere and great esteem, I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. Franklin.

TO JOHN JAY.

Passy, 8 February, 1785.

Dear Sir,

I received by the Marquis de Lafayette your kind letter of the 13th of December. It gave me pleasure on two accounts; as it informed me of the public welfare, and that of your, I may almost say *our* dear little family; for, since I had the pleasure of their being with me in the same house, I have ever felt a tender affection for them, equal I believe to that of most fathers.

I did hope to have heard by the last packet of your having accepted the secretaryship of foreign affaris, but was disappointed. I write to you now, therefore, only as a private friend; yet I may mention respecting public affairs, that, as far as I can perceive, the good

disposition of this court towards us continues. I wish I could say as much for the rest of the European courts. I think that their desire of being connected with us by treaties is of late much abated; and this I suppose is occasioned by the pains Britain takes to represent us everywhere as distracted with divisions, discontented with our governments, the people unwilling to pay taxes, the Congress unable to collect them, and many desiring the restoration of the old government. The English papers are full of this stuff, and their ministers get it copied into the foreign papers. The moving about of the Congress from place to place has also a bad effect, in giving color to the reports of their being afraid of the people. I hope they will soon settle somewhere, and, by the steadiness and wisdom of their measures, dissipate all those mists of misrepresentation raised by the remaining malice of ancient enemies, and establish our reputation for national justice and prudence as they have done for courage and perseverance.

It grieves me that we have not been able to discharge our first year's payment of interest to this court, due the beginning of last month. I hope it will be the only failure, and that effectual measures will be taken to be exactly punctual hereafter. *The good paymaster*, says the proverb, *is lord of another man's purse.* The bad one, if he ever has again occasion to borrow, must pay dearly for his carelessness and injustice.

You are happy in having got back safe to your country. I should be less unhappy, if I could imagine the delay of my *congé* useful to the States, or in the least degree necessary. But they have many equally capable of doing all I have to do here. The new proposed treaties are the most important things; but two can go through them as well as three, if indeed

any are likely to be completed, which I begin to doubt, since the new ones make little progress, and the old ones, which wanted only the *fiat* of Congress, seem now to be going rather backward; I mean those I had projected with Denmark and Portugal.

My grandsons are sensible of the honor of your remembrance, and present their respects to you and Mrs. Jay. I add my best wishes of health and happiness to you all, being with sincere esteem and affection, dear Sir, your most obedient humble servant,

B. Franklin.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Passy, 8 February, 1785.

Sir,

I received by the Marquis de Lafayette the two letters you did me the honor of writing to me the 11th and 14th of December; the one enclosing a letter from Congress to the King, the other a resolve of Congress respecting the convention for establishing consuls. The letter was immediately delivered and well received. The resolve came too late to suspend signing the convention, it having been done July last, and a copy sent so long since, that we now expected the ratification. As that copy seems to have miscarried I now send another.

I am not informed what objection has arisen in Congress to the plan sent me. Mr. Jefferson thinks it may have been to the part which restrained the consuls from all concern in commerce. That article was omitted, being thought unnecessary to be stipulated, since either party would always have the power of imposing such restraints on its own officers, whenever it should think fit. I am, however, of opinion

that this or any other reasonable article or alteration may be obtained at the desire of Congress, and established by a supplement.

Permit me, Sir, to congratulate you on your being called to the high honor of presiding in our national councils, and to wish you every felicity, being with the most perfect esteem, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO RICHARD PRICE.

Purchase of Books for the Town of Franklin.

Passy, 18 March, 1785.

DEAR FRIEND,

My nephew, Mr. Williams, will have the honor of delivering you this line. It is to request from you a list of a few good books, to the value of about twenty-five pounds, such as are most proper to inculcate principles of sound religion and just government. A new town in the State of Massachusetts having done me the honor of naming itself after me, and proposing to build a steeple to their meeting-house if I would give them a bell, I have advised the sparing themselves the expense of a steeple, for the present, and that they would accept of books instead of a bell, sense being preferable to sound. These are therefore intended as the commencement of a little parochial library for the use of a society of intelligent, respectable farmers, such as our country people generally consist of. Besides your own works, I would only mention, on the recommendation of my sister, "Stennett's *Discourse on Personal Religion*," which may be one book of the number, if you know and approve it.*

* Dr. Price complied with this request, as may be seen in his letter under the date of June 3d, 1785. The books were procured and for-

With the highest esteem and respect, I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO WILLIAM CARMICHAEL.

Passy, 22 March, 1785.

DEAR SIR,

I received duly your letter of the 27th past, which gave me great pleasure, as the length of time since I had heard from you made me apprehensive that you might be ill. I immediately communicated the papers enclosed with it to my colleagues, Messrs. Adams and Jefferson, and we have had several meetings on the Barbary affair. Probably by next week's post we may write fully upon it to you, and to Morocco.

I am glad you are likely to succeed in obtaining the liberty of our silly countryman. The discipline they have given him is, however, not misapplied. Mr. Grand being now in cash, your bills on him for your

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warded to the town of Franklin. The Reverend Nathaniel Emmons, clergyman of the parish for which the library was designed, preached a sermon, in commemoration of this bounty, entitled, "*The Dignity of Man; a Discourse addressed to the Congregation in Franklin, upon the Occasion of their receiving from Dr. Franklin the Mark of his Respect in a rich Donation of Books, appropriated to the Use of a Parish Library.*" It was printed in the year 1787, and the following dedication was prefixed to it. "To his Excellency Benjamin Franklin, President of the State of Pennsylvania; the Ornament of Genius, the Patron of Science, and the Boast of Man; this Discourse is inscribed, with the greatest Deference, Humility, and Gratitude, by his obliged and most humble Servant, the Author." The words chosen by the preacher for his text were from the impressive charge of David to Solomon; "*Show thyself a Man.*" He enlarged upon the importance of intellectual and moral culture, pointing out the means, and enforcing the use of them by persuasive arguments. He referred his hearers to the example of Franklin, as affording a pertinent illustration of the text, and encouragement to the hopes of all, who would employ their powers for the attainment of high and useful objects.

salary will be duly honored. I mention your drawing on him, because probably I may not be here, as I expect daily the permission of Congress to return home, and shall embrace the first opportunity. Wherever I am, be assured of the invariable esteem and attachment of, dear Sir, your affectionate friend,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Passy, 12 April, 1785.

SIR,

M. de Chaumont, who will have the honor of presenting this line to your Excellency, is a young gentleman of excellent character, whose father was one of our most early friends in this country, which he manifested by crediting us with a thousand barrels of gunpowder and other military stores in 1776, before we had provided any apparent means of payment. He has, as I understand, some demands to make on Congress, the nature of which I am unacquainted with; but my regard for the family makes me wish, that they may obtain a speedy consideration, and such favorable issue as they may appear to merit.

To this end, I beg leave to recommend him to your countenance and protection, and am, with great respect, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO BENJAMIN VAUGHAN.

Manufactures. — Books. — Loose Printing.

Passy, 21 April, 1785.

Dear Friend,

I received your kind letter of the 23d past, by Mr. Perry, with the other bottle of Blackrie. I thank you much for your care in sending them. I should have been glad to be of any use to Mr. Perry; but he had placed his children before I saw him, and he stayed with me only a few minutes.

We see much in parliamentary proceedings, and in papers and pamphlets, of the injury the concessions to Ireland will do to the *manufacturers* of England, while the *people* of England seem to be forgotten, as if quite out of the question. If the Irish can manufacture cottons, and stuffs, and silks, and linens, and cutlery, and toys, and books, &c. &c. &c., so as to sell them cheaper in England than the *manufacturers* of England sell them, is not this good for the *people* of England, who are not manufacturers? And will not even the manufacturers themselves share the benefit? Since if cottons are cheaper, all the other manufacturers who wear cottons will save in that article; and so of the rest. If books can be had much cheaper from Ireland, (which I believe, for I bought Blackstone there for twenty-four shillings, when it was sold in England at four guineas,) is not this an advantage, not to English booksellers, indeed, but to English readers, and to learning? And of all the complainants, perhaps these booksellers are least worthy of consideration. The catalogue you last sent me amazes me by the high prices (said to be the lowest) affixed to each article. And one can scarce see a new book, without observ-

ing the excessive artifices made use of to puff up a paper of verses into a pamphlet, a pamphlet into an octavo, and an octavo into a quarto, with scab-boardings, white-lines, sparse titles of chapters, and exorbitant margins, to such a degree, that the selling of paper seems now the object, and printing on it only the pretence. I enclose the copy of a page in a late comedy. Between every two lines there is a white space equal to another line. You have a law, I think, against butchers blowing of veal to make it look fatter; why not one against booksellers' blowing of books to make them look bigger. All this *to yourself;* you can easily guess the reason.

My grandson is a little indisposed, but sends you two pamphlets, *Figaro*, and *Le Roy Voyageur* The first is a play of Beaumarchais, which has had a great run here. The other a representation of all the supposed errors of government in this country, some of which are probably exaggerated. It is not publicly sold; we shall send some more shortly.

Please to remember me very respectfully and affectionately to good Dr. Price. I am glad that he has printed a translation of the Testament, it may do good I am ever, my dear friend, yours most sincerely,

B. Franklin.

Enclosed is the foregoing Letter.

"Scene IV.

Sir John and Wildmore.

Sir John.

Whither so fast?

Wildmore.

To the Opera.

Sir JOHN.

It is not the ——— ?

WILDMORE.

Yes it is.

Sir JOHN.

Never on a Sunday.

WILDMORE.

Is this Sunday?

Sir JOHN.

Yes sure.

WILDMORE.

I remember nothing; I shall soon forget my Christian name."

If this page was printed running on like Erasmus's Colloquies, it would not have made more than five lines.

TO JOHN INGENHOUSZ.

Invitation to accompany him to America. — Idle Stories about that Country. — Emperor of Germany.

Passy, 29 April, 1785.

DEAR SIR,

I thank you much for the postscript respecting my disorder, the stone. I have taken heretofore, and am now again taking the remedy you mention, which is called *Blackrie's Solvent.* It is the soap lie, with lime-water, and I believe it may have some effect in diminishing the symptoms, and preventing the growth

of the stone, which is all I expect from it. It does not hurt my appetite; I sleep well, and enjoy my friends in cheerful conversation as usual. But, as I cannot use much exercise, I eat more sparingly than formerly, and I drink no wine.

I admire, that you should be so timid in asking leave of your good imperial master to make a journey for visiting a friend. I am persuaded you would succeed, and I hope the proposition I have repeated to you in this letter will assist your courage, and enable you to ask and obtain. If you come hither soon, you may, when present, get your book finished, and be ready to proceed with me to America. While writing this, I have received from Congress my leave to return; and I believe I shall be ready to embark by the middle of July, at farthest. I shall now be free from politics for the rest of my life. Welcome again, my dear philosophical amusements!

I see by a full page of your letter, that you have been possessed with strange ideas of America; that there is no justice to be obtained there, no recovery of debts, projects of insurrection to overturn the present government, &c. &c.; that a Virginia colonel, nephew of the governor, had cheated a stranger of a hundred thousand livres, and that somebody was imprisoned for only speaking of it; and the like very improbable stories. They are all fictions or misrepresentations. If they were truths, all strangers would avoid such a country, and foreign merchants would as soon carry their goods to sell in Newgate as America. Think a little on the sums England has spent to preserve a monopoly of the trade of that people, with whom they had long been acquainted; and of the desire all Europe is now manifesting to obtain a share of that trade. Our ports are full of their ships, their mer

chants buying and selling in our streets continually, and returning with our products. Would this happen, could such commerce be continued with us, if we were such a collection of scoundrels and villains as we have been represented to you? And insurrections against our rulers are not only unlikely, as the rulers are the choice of the people, but unnecessary; as, if not liked, they may be changed annually by the new elections.

I own you have cause, great cause to complain of ——, but you are wrong to condemn the whole country by a single sample. I have seen many countries, and I do not know a country in the world in which justice is so well administered, where protection and favor have so little power to impede its operations, and where debts are recovered with so much facility. If I thought it such a country as has been painted to you, I should certainly never return to it. The truth, I believe, is, that more goods have been carried thither from all parts of Europe, than the consumption of the country requires, and it is natural that some of the adventurers are willing to discourage others from following them, lest the prices should still be kept down by the arrival of fresh cargoes; and it is not unlikely, that some negligent or unfaithful factors sent thither, may have given such accounts to excuse their not making remittances. And the English magnify all this, and spread it abroad in their papers, to dissuade foreigners from attempting to interfere with them in their commerce with us.

Your account of the Emperor's condescending conversation with you concerning me is pleasing. I respect very much the character of that monarch, and think, that, if I were one of his subjects, he would find me a good one. I am glad that his difference with your country is likely to be accommodated with-

out bloodshed. The *Courier de l'Europe*, and some other papers, printed a letter on that difference, which they ascribed to me. Be assured, my friend, that I never wrote it, nor was ever presumptuous enough to meddle with an affair so much out of my way. Yours, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

TO COUNT DE VERGENNES.

Passy, 3 May, 1785.

SIR,

I have the honor to acquaint your Excellency, that I have at length obtained, and yesterday received, the permission of Congress to return to America. As my malady makes it impracticable for me to pay my devoirs at Versailles personally, may I beg the favor of you, Sir, to express respectfully for me to his Majesty, the deep sense I have of all the inestimable benefits his goodness has conferred on my country; a sentiment that it will be the business of the little remainder of life now left me, to impress equally on the minds of all my countrymen. My sincere prayers are, that God may shower down his blessings on the King, the Queen, their children, and all the royal family to the latest generations!

Permit me, at the same time, to offer you my thankful acknowledgments for the protection and countenance you afforded me at my arrival, and your many favors during my residence here, of which I shall always retain the most grateful remembrance. My grandson would have had the honor of waiting on you with this letter, but he has been some time ill of a fever.

With the greatest esteem and respect, and best wishes for the constant prosperity of yourself, and all

your amiable family, I am, Sir, your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. Franklin.

TO MRS. MARY HEWSON.

Passy, 5 May, 1785.

My dear, dear Friend,

I received your little letter from Dover, which gave me great pleasure, as it informed me of your happy progress so far in your way home. I hope the rest of your journey was as prosperous.*

You talk of obligations to me, when in fact I am the person obliged. I passed a long winter, which appeared the shortest of any I ever past. Such is the effect of pleasing society, with friends one loves.

I have now received my permission to return, and am making my preparations. I hope to get away in June. I promise myself, or rather flatter myself, that I shall be happy when at home. But, however happy that circumstance may make me, your joining me there will surely make me happier, provided your change of country may be for the advantage of your dear little family. When you have made up your mind on the subject, let me know by a line, that I may prepare a house for you as near me, and otherwise as convenient for you, as possible.

My neighbours begin to come out from Paris, and replace themselves in their Passy houses. They inquire after you, and are sorry you are gone before they could make themselves known to you. M. le Veillard, in particular, has told me at different times,

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* Mrs. Hewson and her children had spent the winter with Dr. Franklin at Passy.

what indeed I knew long since, *C'est une bien digne femme, cette Madame Hewson, une très aimable femme.* I would not tell you this if I thought it would make you vain; but that is impossible; you have too much good sense.

So wish me a good voyage, and, when you pray at church for all that travel by land or sea, think of your ever affectionate friend,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. My love to William, and Thomas, and Eliza, and tell them I miss their cheerful prattle. Temple being sick, and Benjamin at Paris, I have found it very *triste* breakfasting alone, and sitting alone, and without any tea in the evening.

FROM M. DE RAYNEVAL TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

Versailles, 8 May, 1785.

SIR,

I have learned with the greatest concern, that you are soon to leave us. You will carry with you the affections of all France, for nobody has been more esteemed than you. I shall call on you at Passy, to desire you to retain for me a share in your remembrance, and renew to you personally the assurances of the most perfect attachment, with which I have the honor to be, Sir, &c.

DE RAYNEVAL.

TO JOHN JAY.*

Passy, 10 May, 1785.

Dear Sir,

I received your kind letter of the 8th of March, enclosing the resolution of Congress, permitting my return to America, for which I am very thankful, and am now preparing to depart the first good opportunity. Next to the pleasure of rejoining my own family will be that of seeing you and yours well and happy, and embracing once more my little friend, whose singular attachment to me I shall always remember.

I shall be glad to render any acceptable service to Mr. Randall. I conveyed the bayberry wax to Abbé de Chalut, with your compliments, as you desired. He returns his with many thanks. Be pleased to make my respectful compliments acceptable to Mrs. Jay, and believe me ever, with sincere and great respect and esteem, &c.

B. Franklin.

P. S. The striking of the medals being now in agitation here, I send the enclosed for consideration.

TO CHARLES THOMSON.

Passy, 10 May, 1785.

Dear Sir,

An old gentleman in Switzerland, long of the magistracy there, having written a book entitled *Du Gouvernement et des Mœurs*, which is thought to contain many matters, that may be useful in America, desired to know of me how he could convey a number of printed

* Mr. Jay was now Secretary of Foreign Affairs, having been chosen as successor to Mr. Livingston, who had resigned.

copies, to be distributed gratis among the members of Congress. I advised his addressing the package to you by way of Amsterdam, whence a friend of mine would forward it. It is accordingly shipped there on board the Van Berckel, Captain W. Campbell. There are good things in the work, but his chapter on the liberty of the press appears to me to contain more rhetoric than reason. With great esteem, I am ever, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Passy, 19 May, 1785.

—— The conversations you mention respecting America are suitable. Those people speak what they wish; but she was certainly never in a more happy situation. They are angry with us, and speak all manner of evil of us; but we flourish, notwithstanding. They put me in mind of a violent High Church factor, resident in Boston, when I was a boy. He had bought upon speculation a Connecticut cargo of onions, which he flattered himself he might sell again to great profit, but the price fell, and they lay upon hand. He was heartily vexed with his bargain, especially when he observed they began to *grow* in the store he had filled with them. He showed them one day to a friend. "Here they are," said he, "and they are *growing* too! I damn them every day; but I think they are like the Presbyterians; the more I curse them, the more they grow." Yours,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO GEORGE WHATLEY.

Passy, 19 May, 1785.

Dear old Friend,

I received the very good letter you sent me by my grandson, together with your resemblance, which is placed in my chamber, and gives me great pleasure. There is no trade, they say, without returns, and therefore I am punctual in making those you have ordered.

I intended this should have been a long epistle, but I am interrupted, and can only add, that I am ever yours most affectionately,

B. Franklin.

FROM COUNT DE VERGENNES TO B. FRANKLIN.

Regrets Dr. Franklin's Departure. — Assures him of the Esteem of the King.

Translation.

Versailles, 22 May, 1785.

Sir,

I have learned with much concern of your retiring, and of your approaching departure for America. You cannot doubt but that the regrets, which you will leave, will be proportionate to the consideration you so justly enjoy.

I can assure you, Sir, that the esteem the King entertains for you does not leave you any thing to wish, and that his Majesty will learn with real satisfaction, that your fellow citizens have rewarded, in a manner worthy of you, the important services that you have rendered them.

I beg, Sir, that you will preserve for me a share in

vour remembrance, and never doubt the sincerity of the interest I take in your happiness. It is founded on the sentiments of attachment, of which I have assured you, and with which I have the honor to be, &c.

DE VERGENNES.

TO GEORGE WHATLEY.

Moral and Philosophical Reflections. — Foundling Hospital at Paris. — Cincinnati. — American Confederation. — Anecdote of three Greenlanders. — Double Spectacles.

Passy, 23 May, 1785.

DEAR OLD FRIEND,

I sent you a few lines the other day, with my medallion, when I should have written more, but was prevented by the coming in of a *bavard*, who worried me till evening. I bore with him, and now you are to bear with me; for I shall probably *bavarder* in answering your letter.

I am not acquainted with the saying of Alphonsus, which you allude to as a sanctification of your rigidity, in refusing to allow me the plea of old age, as an excuse for my want of exactness in correspondence. What was that saying? You do not, it seems, feel any occasion for such an excuse, though you are, as you say, rising seventy-five. But I am rising (perhaps more properly falling) eighty, and I leave the excuse with you till you arrive at that age; perhaps you may then be more sensible of its validity, and see fit to use it for yourself.

I must agree with you, that the gout is bad, and that the stone is worse. I am happy in not having them both together, and I join in your prayer, that

you may live till you die without either. But I doubt the author of the epitaph you send me was a little mistaken, when he, speaking of the world, says, that

> "he ne'er cared a pin
> What they said or may say of the mortal within."

It is so natural to wish to be well spoken of, whether alive or dead, that I imagine he could not be quite exempt from that desire; and that at least he wished to be thought a wit, or he would not have given himself the trouble of writing so good an epitaph to leave behind him. Was it not as worthy of his care, that the world should say he was an honest and a good man? I like better the concluding sentiment in the old song, called *The Old Man's Wish*, wherein, after wishing for a warm house in a country town, an easy horse, some good authors, ingenious and cheerful companions, a pudding on Sundays, with stout ale, and a bottle of Burgundy, &c. &c., in separate stanzas, each ending with this burthen,

> "May I govern my passions with absolute sway,
> Grow wiser and better as my strength wears away,
> Without gout or stone, by a gentle decay;"

he adds,

> "With a courage undaunted may I face my last day,
> And, when I am gone, may the better sort say,
> 'In the morning when sober, in the evening when mellow,
> He 's gone, and has not left behind him his fellow;
> For he governed his passions, &c.'"

But what signifies our wishing? Things happen, after all, as they will happen. I have sung that *wishing song* a thousand times, when I was young, and now find, at fourscore, that the three contraries have befallen me, being subject to the gout and the stone, and not being yet master of all my passions. Like the proud girl in my country, who wished and re-

solved not to marry a parson, nor a Presbyterian, nor an Irishman; and at length found herself married to an Irish Presbyterian parson.

You see I have some reason to wish, that, in a future state, I may not only be *as well as I was*, but a little better. And I hope it; for I, too, with your poet, *trust in God.* And when I observe, that there is great frugality, as well as wisdom, in his works, since he has been evidently sparing both of labor and materials; for by the various wonderful inventions of propagation, he has provided for the continual peopling his world with plants and animals, without being at the trouble of repeated new creations; and by the natural reduction of compound substances to their original elements, capable of being employed in new compositions, he has prevented the necessity of creating new matter; so that the earth, water, air, and perhaps fire, which being compounded form wood, do, when the wood is dissolved, return, and again become air, earth, fire, and water; I say, that, when I see nothing annihilated, and not even a drop of water wasted, I cannot suspect the annihilation of souls, or believe, that he will suffer the daily waste of millions of minds ready made that now exist, and put himself to the continual trouble of making new ones. Thus finding myself to exist in the world, I believe I shall, in some shape or other, always exist; and, with all the inconveniences human life is liable to, I shall not object to a new edition of mine; hoping, however, that the *errata* of the last may be corrected.

I return your note of children received in the Foundling Hospital at Paris, from 1741 to 1755, inclusive; and I have added the years succeeding, down to 1770. Those since that period I have not been able to obtain. I have noted in the margin the gradual increase,

viz. from every tenth child so thrown upon the public, till it comes to every third! Fifteen years have passed since the last account, and probably it may now amount to one half. Is it right to encourage this monstrous deficiency of natural affection? A surgeon I met with here excused the women of Paris, by saying, seriously, that they *could not* give suck; "*Car*," said he, "*elles n'ont point de tetons.*" He assured me it was a fact, and bade me look at them, and observe how flat they were on the breast; "they have nothing more there," said he, "than I have upon the back of my hand." I have since thought that there might be some truth in his observation, and that, possibly, nature, finding they made no use of bubbies, has left off giving them any. Yet, since Rousseau pleaded, with admirable eloquence, for the rights of children to their mother's milk, the mode has changed a little; and some ladies of quality now suckle their infants and find milk enough. May the mode descend to the lower ranks, till it becomes no longer the custom to pack their infants away, as soon as born, to the *Enfans Trouvés*, with the careless observation, that the King is better able to maintain them.

I am credibly informed, that nine-tenths of them die there pretty soon, which is said to be a great relief to the institution, whose funds would not otherwise be sufficient to bring up the remainder. Except the few persons of quality above mentioned, and the multitude who send to the Hospital, the practice is to hire nurses in the country to carry out the children, and take care of them there. Here is an office for examining the health of nurses, and giving them licenses. They come to town on certain days of the week in companies to receive the children, and we often meet trains of them on the road returning to the neigh-

bouring villages, with each a child in her arms. But those, who are good enough to try this way of raising their children, are often not able to pay the expense; so that the prisons of Paris are crowded with wretched fathers and mothers confined *pour mois de nourrice*, though it is laudably a favorite charity to pay for them, and set such prisoners at liberty. I wish success to the new project of assisting the poor to keep their children at home, because I think there is no nurse like a mother (or not many), and that, if parents did not immediately send their infants out of their sight, they would in a few days begin to love them, and thence be spurred to greater industry for their maintenance. This is a subject you understand better than I, and, therefore, having perhaps said too much, I drop it. I only add to the notes a remark, from the *History of the Academy of Sciences*, much in favor of the Foundling Institution.

The Philadelphia bank goes on, as I hear, very well. What you call the Cincinnati Institution is no institution of our government, but a private convention among the officers of our late army, and so universally disliked by the people, that it is supposed it will be dropped. It was considered as an attempt to establish something like an hereditary rank or nobility. I hold with you, that it was wrong; may I add, that all *descending* honors are wrong and absurd; that the honor of virtuous actions appertains only to him that performs them, and is in its nature incommunicable. If it were communicable by descent, it must also be divisible among the descendants; and the more ancient the family, the less would be found existing in any one branch of it; to say nothing of the greater chance of unlucky interruptions.*

* See letter to Mrs. Bache, dated January 26th, 1784, above, p. 58.

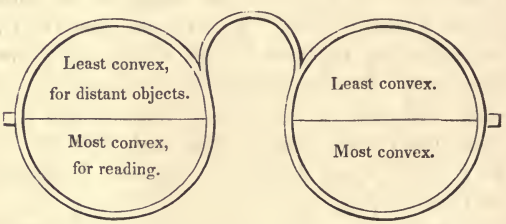
Our constitution seems not to be well understood with you. If the Congress were a permanent body, there would be more reason in being jealous of giving it powers. But its members are chosen annually, cannot be chosen more than three years successively, nor more than three years in seven; and any of them may be recalled at any time, whenever their constituents shall be dissatisfied with their conduct.* They are of the people, and return again to mix with the people, having no more durable preëminence than the different grains of sand in an hourglass. Such an assembly cannot easily become dangerous to liberty. They are the servants of the people, sent together to do the people's business, and promote the public welfare; their powers must be sufficient, or their duties cannot be performed. They have no profitable appointments, but a mere payment of daily wages, such as are scarcely equivalent to their expenses; so that, having no chance for great places, and enormous salaries or pensions, as in some countries, there is no canvassing or bribing for elections.

I wish Old England were as happy in its government, but I do not see it. Your people, however, think their constitution the best in the world, and affect to despise ours. It is comfortable to have a good opinion of one's self, and of every thing that belongs to us; to think one's own religion, king, and wife, the best of all possible wives, kings, or religions. I remember three Greenlanders, who had travelled two years in Europe under the care of some Moravian missionaries, and had visited Germany, Denmark, Holland, and England. When I asked them at Philadelphia, where they were in their way home, whether, now they had

* These were the provisions of the old confederation.

seen how much more commodiously the white people lived by the help of the arts, they would not choose to remain among us; their answer was, that they were pleased with having had an opportunity of seeing so many fine things, *but they chose to* LIVE *in their own country.* Which country, by the way, consisted of rock only, for the Moravians were obliged to carry earth in their ship from New York, for the purpose of making a cabbage garden.

By Mr. Dollond's saying, that my double spectacles can only serve particular eyes, I doubt he has not been rightly informed of their construction. I imagine it will be found pretty generally true, that the same convexity of glass, through which a man sees clearest and best at the distance proper for reading, is not the best for greater distances. I therefore had formerly two pair of spectacles, which I shifted occasionally, as in travelling I sometimes read, and often wanted to regard the prospects. Finding this change troublesome, and not always sufficiently ready, I had the glasses cut, and half of each kind associated in the same circle, thus,



By this means, as I wear my spectacles constantly, I have only to move my eyes up or down, as I want to see distinctly far or near, the proper glasses being always ready. This I find more particularly convenient since my being in France, the glasses that serve me

best at table to see what I eat, not being the best to see the faces of those on the other side of the table who speak to me; and when one's ears are not well accustomed to the sounds of a language, a sight of the movements in the features of him that speaks helps to explain; so that I understand French better by the help of my spectacles.

My intended translator of your piece, the only one I know who understands the *subject*, as well as the two languages, (which a translator ought to do, or he cannot make so good a translation,) is at present occupied in an affair that prevents his undertaking it; but that will soon be over. I thank you for the notes. I should be glad to have another of the printed pamphlets.

We shall always be ready to take your children, if you send them to us. I only wonder, that, since London draws to itself, and consumes such numbers of your country people, the country should not, to supply their places, want and willingly receive the children you have to dispose of. That circumstance, together with the multitude who voluntarily part with their freedom as men, to serve for a time as lackeys, or for life as soldiers, in consideration of small wages, seems to me proof that your island is over-peopled. And yet it is afraid of emigrations! Adieu, my dear friend, and believe me ever yours very affectionately,

B. Franklin.

FROM THOMAS PERCIVAL TO B. FRANKLIN.

Perceptive Power of Vegetables. — Bishop Watson's Collection of Tracts. — Christian Charity.

Manchester, 23 May, 1785.

DEAR SIR,

I owe you my most cordial acknowledgments for the very friendly letter, with which you favored me last summer by Mr. Smeathman. Your ingenious manuscript concerning the cause of the severe cold in the winter of 1783 – 4 I delivered to our Philosophical Society, and it is ordered by the committee of papers to be inserted in a volume of Memoirs, which is now in the press.* I am commissioned to return the thanks of the Society to you for this communication, to request your future correspondence, and to acquaint you, that we have honored our Institution by electing you an extraordinary member.

The gentleman, who took charge of your diploma, conveys it with a little tract of mine on the *Perceptive Power of Vegetables*. To the whimsical doctrine contained in this *jeu d'esprit*, you will readily believe I can hardly be a convert. Yet, the further we carry our researches into the comparative nature of animals and vegetables, the more shall we find that they elucidate the economy of each other, and reciprocally discover principles, which are common to both. Late observations have evinced, that animals have the power of resisting, to a certain point, such degrees of heat or cold as are injurious to them. It is obvious, that vegetables must be endued with the same faculty, because they are found to flourish in climates where the

* See this paper in the present work, Vol. VI. p. 455.

circumambient air varies considerably from their proper temperature. And the fact has been fully illustrated by Mr. John Hunter's experiments.

Your very kind acceptance of the volume of *Moral and Literary Dissertations*, which I sent to you by Mr. Thomas White, afforded me the sincerest satisfaction; and the honor you did me, by perusing the whole of it before you slept, is more flattering to me than the approbation of a hundred critics.

I have lately received a very valuable present from my friend Dr. Watson, Bishop of Landaff. It is a collection of tracts on the Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion, selected from the works of churchmen, laymen, and dissenters, systematically arranged in six octavo volumes, so as to form a complete library for the junior and inferior clergy. I am charmed with the candor, the liberality, and the spirit of catholicism, which his Lordship has avowed with the utmost energy and freedom in his Preface. The true Christian charity of a bishop, thus manifested, will promote the interest of the Church of England far more honorably and permanently, than creeds, tests, or anathemas. He has proved himself the generous minister of peace, and, if his brethren follow so laudable an example by offering the olive branch, instead of brandishing the sword, or throwing down the gauntlet, I hope and trust an end will be put to theological contention and hostility.

Is there any prospect of your revisiting England? Few events would give me more delight, than to have an opportunity of assuring you in person, with what cordial esteem and respect, I have the honor to be, dear Sir, &c. THOMAS PERCIVAL.

FROM RICHARD PRICE TO B. FRANKLIN.

Library for the Town of Franklin.

Newington Green, 3 June, 1785.

My dear Friend,

I wrote to you and Mr. Jefferson a few weeks ago, and sent you some copies of the edition lately published here of my pamphlet on the American Revolution. Mr. Williams has given me much pleasure by calling upon me, and bringing me a letter from you. I have, according to your desire, furnished him with a list of such books on religion and government, as I think some of the best, and added a present to the parish that is to bear your name, of such of my own publications as I think may not be unsuitable. Should this be the commencement of parochial libraries in the States, it will do great good.

Mr. Williams tells me, that you have obtained permission to resign, and that you are likely soon to return to America, there to finish your life; a life, which, without doubt, will be one of the most distinguished in future annals. Indeed, I cannot wonder, that, after being so long tossed on the sea of politics, and seeing your country, partly under your guidance, carried through a hard contest, and a most important revolution established, you should wish to withdraw to rest and tranquillity.

May the best blessings of Heaven attend you, and the sad malady under which you are suffering be rendered as tolerable to you as possible. You are going to the new world; I must stay in this; but I trust there is a world beyond the grave, where we shall be happier than ever. I shall be always following you with my good wishes, and remain with unalterable respect and affection, &c.

Richard Price.

FROM CLAUDIUS CRIGAN, BISHOP OF SODOR AND MAN, TO B. FRANKLIN.

Isle of Man, 7 June, 1785.

The name of Dr. Franklin stands so high in politics and philosophy, that it were a proof of the depth of ignorance and obscurity to be unacquainted with the great things he has done in both these useful sciences. Europe as well as America looks with equal veneration and admiration on the great man, who supported an oppressed and almost sinking state, and forsook her not until he secured her freedom and established her independence among the sovereigns of the world. Some of these few, who have had the happiness of a personal acquaintance with him, have assured me, they found him as willing to communicate his knowledge as he had been studious to obtain it, and that no one could leave him without carrying away some improvement, and receiving the most pleasing entertainment.

When crowns court attention, it is scarcely decent for common people to solicit admission; but a Mr. Hamilton of Ireland, and some other friends of mine, have given me such accounts of your condescension, that I am emboldened to give you this trouble, and to presume so far as to entreat the liberty of introducing my vicar-general, the Reverend Mr. Christian, to you; and, as we have lately received some imperfect sketches of the establishment of the Episcopal Church of England in the southern colonies of North America, should Mr. Christian request any information from you, or propose any thing for the benefit of religion in that quarter of the world, you may depend with the greatest safety on his talents and intelligence in Church business, as well as his sincerity in assisting me in executing any part in the system he may have the honor

of proposing to you. I shall consider a few lines in acknowledgment of your forgiveness of this intrusion of myself and my friend upon you, as the greatest honor of my life, and remain, with the most profound respect, your most obedient servant,

CLAUDIUS SODOR AND MAN.

TO THOMAS BARCLAY.

Relative to his Charges for Salary as Minister Plenipotentiary.

Paris, 19 June, 1785.

SIR,

With respect to my continuing to charge two thousand five hundred pounds sterling per annum as my salary, of which you desire some explanation, I send you, in support of that charge, the resolution of Congress, which is in these words.

"In Congress, October 5th, 1779. Resolved, that each of the Ministers Plenipotentiary be allowed at the rate of two thousand five hundred pounds sterling per annum, and each of their secretaries at the rate of one thousand pounds sterling per annum, in full for their services and expenses respectively. That the salary of each of the said officers be computed from the time of his leaving his place of abode, to enter on the duties of his office, and be continued three months after the notice of his recall."

The several bills I afterwards received, drawn on the Congress banker, Mr. Grand, for my salary, were all calculated on that sum, as my salary; and neither the banker nor myself has received notice of any change respecting me. He has accordingly, since the drawing ceased, continued to pay me at the same rate.

I have, indeed, heard, that a resolution was passed last year, that the salaries of Plenipotentiaries should be no more than two thousand pounds sterling per annum. But the resolution, I suppose, can relate only to such Plenipotentiaries as should be afterwards appointed; for I cannot conceive, that the Congress, after promising a minister twenty-five hundred pounds a year, and when he has thereby been encouraged to engage in a way of living for their honor, which only that salary can support, would think it just to diminish it a fifth, and leave him under the difficulty of reducing his expenses proportionably; a thing scarce practicable; the necessity of which he might have avoided, if he had not confided in their original promise.

But the article of salary with all the rest of my accounts will be submitted to the judgment of Congress, together with some other considerable articles I have not charged, but on which I shall expect, from their equity, some consideration. If, for want of knowing precisely the intention of Congress, what expenses should be deemed public, and what private, I have charged any article to the public, which should be defrayed by me, their banker has my order, as soon as the pleasure of Congress shall be made known to him, to rectify the error, by transferring the amount to my private account, and discharging by so much that of the public. I have the honor to be, &c.

B. Franklin.

TO ———.

Dissuading him from attempting to cross to England in a Balloon.

Passy, 20 June, 1785.

DEAR SIR,

I have just received the only letter from you that has given me pain. It informs me of your intention to attempt passing to England in the car of a balloon. In the present imperfect state of that invention, I think it much too soon to hazard a voyage of that distance. It is said here by some of those, who have had experience, that as yet they have not found means to keep up a balloon more than two hours; for that, by now and then losing air to prevent rising too high and bursting, and now and then discharging ballast to avoid descending too low; these means of regulation are exhausted. Besides this, all the circumstances of danger by disappointment, in the operation of *soupapes*,* &c. &c., seem not to be yet well known, and therefore not easily provided against. For on Wednesday last M. Pilâtre de Rosier, who had studied the subject as much as any man, lost his support in the air, by the bursting of his balloon, or by some other means we are yet unacquainted with, and fell with his companion† from the height of one thousand toises, on the rocky coast, and were both found dashed to pieces.

You, having lived a good life, do not fear death. But pardon the anxious freedom of a friend, if he tells you, that, the continuance of your life being of importance to your family and your country, though you might laudably hazard it for their good, you have no

* Valves. † The Marquis d'Arlandes.

right to risk it for a fancy. I pray God this may reach you in time, and have some effect towards changing your design; being ever, my dear friend, yours affectionately, B. Franklin.

FROM FRANCIS MASERES TO B. FRANKLIN.

Policy of restoring the confiscated Estates to the Loyalists. — National Debt.

Inner Temple, 20 June, 1785.

Sir,

I have this day received by the hands of M. Du Calvet the favor of your letter, which gave me a very singular pleasure after so long and so unfortunate an interruption of our correspondence. The event of the late contest has brought great misfortunes upon both countries, or, at least, upon Great Britain, by increasing the national debt to at least double its former quantity, as well as very much reducing the extent of its dominions. But, melancholy as this event is, it is less displeasing than the contrary event of a total subjugation of the revolted colonies by force of arms, and a consequent government of them by military power, by erecting forts and citadels, and altering the charters, and governing them by governors and other officers depending entirely on the pleasure of the crown, and in a manner disagreeable to the people, which I conjecture from the Archbishop of York's sermon, of February 21st, 1777, (of which I sent you a paraphrase with the book of Annuities,) would have been the government established over them, if they had been thoroughly subdued in the year 1776.

But, if they could have been reconciled to Great Britain by fair means, and governed, as formerly, with-

out force or soldiers, and with their own consent and good will, I own, I think it would have been for the benefit of all parties. But these views are now at an end, and the new States are, I presume, likely to continue for ever independent of, and consequently foreign to Great Britain. And I am amongst those, who wish them happy in their new condition, and feel no satisfaction from the reports that prevail here, that, from the anarchy and confusion that prevail among them, they have still more reason than we to lament the separation. On the contrary, I sincerely wish, that, as they have been founded on the purest principles of liberty, they may enjoy all the blessings that should result from those principles, and prove a refuge to mankind from the slavery which prevails in almost every part of Europe.

They seem, however, at present to be too much actuated by a spirit of revenge against those of their countrymen, who adhered to their first allegiance, whom they call Tories, and we call Loyalists. After the complete attainment of their desired independence, it would surely have been more agreeable to policy, as well as justice, to have restored to those persons their estates, upon their taking the new oaths of allegiance to the several new governments, which they would have no longer scrupled to do, when the King had absolved them from their allegiance to him, by consenting to the independence of the new States.

When the Commonwealth Parliament of England had cut off King Charles's head, in the year 1649, and set up a republican government, they did not confiscate the estates of the Cavaliers, but left those, who had not been in arms for the King, in the full and quiet possession of all their property, and restored the estates of those who had been in arms for the

King, upon the payment of a composition of only two years' rent, with the exception of a very few persons, whom they considered as very deep malignants (as they called them), or very great offenders, such as the Marquis of Worcester, and the Earl of Derby, and four or five persons more, whose estates they did confiscate. Nothing, I apprehend, would tend more to introduce settlement and good order in the States, than the imitation of this gentle and moderate conduct; and I suppose it would produce likewise the surrender of the posts on the lakes Ontario and Erie to the new States, agreeably to the treaty of peace, till which event, the peace can hardly be considered as firmly established; and God forbid we should have any more war about these posts, or indeed any thing else.

My view, in the observations on the national debt, was not so much to recommend my particular method of diminishing it, in preference to other methods, as to show, that most methods were nearly equally useful for this purpose, provided the same sum of money was applied every year to that purpose, for the same number of years, without any interruption; and that those methods were the fittest to be adopted, which were least likely to be interrupted.

Your old friend, Mr. Jackson, is pretty well in health, but is not in Parliament; and Lord John Cavendish, and Mr. John Yorke, and many other gentlemen of respectable character and condition, are not so now. I should have been very happy to have seen you again in England, and so, I am persuaded, would have been many of your friends, notwithstanding the late unfortunate contentions. But, since that cannot be, and you are returning to America, I heartily wish you health and strength to bear the journey with ease, and to

enjoy your friends and your situation in that part of the world; and I hope, that you will have the satisfaction of contributing, by your wisdom and moderation, to soften the animosities that now prevail there, and to introduce a spirit of peace, settlement, and good order, in their stead, and thereby crown the great work, to which you have so much contributed, of establishing those new States in liberty and independence. I remain, with great regard, &c.

FRANCIS MASERES.

TO FRANCIS MASERES.

Results of the American Contest. — State of America. — The Loyalists. — Confiscation of Estates.

Passy, 26 June, 1785.

SIR,

I have just received your friendly letter of the 20th instant. I agree with you perfectly in the opinion, that, though the contest has been hurtful to both our countries, yet the event, a separation, is better even for yours than success. The reducing and keeping us in subjection by an armed force would have cost you more than the dominion could be worth, and our slavery would have brought on yours. The ancient system of the British empire was a happy one, by which the colonies were allowed to govern and tax themselves. Had it been wisely continued, it is hard to imagine the degree of power and importance in the world that empire might have arrived at. All the means of growing greatness, extent of territory, agriculture, commerce, arts, population, were within its own limits, and therefore at its command.

I used to consider that system as a large and beau-

tiful porcelain vase; I lamented the measures that I saw likely to break it, and strove to prevent them; because, once broken, I saw no probability of its being ever repaired. My endeavours did not succeed; we are broken, and the parts must now do as well as they can for themselves. We may still do well, though separated. I have great hopes of our side, and good wishes for yours. The anarchy and confusion you mention, as supposed to prevail among us, exist only in your newspapers. I have authentic accounts, which assure me, that no people were ever better governed, or more content with their respective constitutions and governments, than the present Thirteen States of America.

A little reflection may convince any reasonable man, that a government wherein the administrators are chosen annually by the free voice of the governed, and may also be recalled at any time if their conduct displeases their constituents, cannot be a tyrannical one, as your Loyalists represent it; who at the same time inconsistently desire to return and live under it. And, among an intelligent, enlightened people, as ours is, there must always be too numerous and too strong a party for supporting good government and the laws, to suffer what is called anarchy. This better account of our situation must be pleasing to your humanity, and therefore I give it you.

But we differ a little in our sentiments respecting the Loyalists (as they call themselves), and the conduct of America towards them, which, you think, "seems actuated by a spirit of revenge; and that it would have been more agreeable to policy, as well as justice, to have restored their estates upon their taking the oaths of allegiance to the new governments." That there should still be some resentment against them in

the breasts of those, who have had their houses, farms, and towns so lately destroyed, and relations scalped under the conduct of these royalists, is not wonderful; though I believe the opposition given by many to their reëstablishing among us is owing to a firm persuasion, that there could be no reliance on their oaths; and that the effect of receiving those people again would be an introduction of that very anarchy and confusion they falsely reproach us with. Even the example you propose, of the English Commonwealth's restoring the estates of the royalists after their being subdued, seems rather to countenance and encourage our acting differently, as probably if the power, which always accompanies property, had not been restored to the royalists, if their estates had remained confiscated, and their persons had been banished, they could not have so much contributed to the restoration of kingly power, and the new government of the republic might have been more durable.

The majority of examples in your history are on the other side of the question. All the estates in England and south of Scotland, and most of those possessed by the descendants of the English in Ireland, are held from ancient confiscations made of the estates of Caledonians and Britons, the original possessors in your island, or the native Irish, in the last century only. It is but a few months since, that your Parliament has, in a few instances, given up confiscations incurred by a rebellion suppressed forty years ago. The war against us was begun by a general act of Parliament, declaring all our estates confiscated; and probably one great motive to the loyalty of the royalists was the hope of sharing in these confiscations. They have played a deep game, staking their estates against ours; and they have been unsuccessful. But

it is a surer game, since they had promises to rely on from your government, of indemnification in case of loss; and I see your Parliament is about to fulfil those promises. To this I have no objection, because, though still our enemies, they are men; they are in necessity; and I think even a hired assassin has a right to his pay from his employer. It seems too more reasonable, that the expense of paying these should fall upon the government who encouraged the mischief done, rather than upon us who suffered it; the confiscated estates making amends but for a very small part of that mischief. It is not, therefore, clear, that our retaining them is chargeable with injustice.

I have hinted above, that the name *loyalist* was improperly assumed by these people. *Royalists* they may perhaps be called. But the true *loyalists* were the people of America, against whom they acted. No people were ever known more truly loyal, and universally so, to their sovereigns. The Protestant succession in the House of Hanover was their idol. Not a Jacobite was to be found from one end of the Colonies to the other. They were affectionate to the people of England, zealous and forward to assist in her wars, by voluntary contributions of men and money, even beyond their proportion. The King and Parliament had frequently acknowledged this by public messages, resolutions, and reimbursements. But they were equally fond of what they esteemed their rights; and, if they resisted when those were attacked, it was a resistance in favor of a British constitution, which every Englishman might share in enjoying, who should come to live among them; it was resisting arbitrary impositions, that were contrary to common right and to their fundamental constitutions, and to constant ancient usage. It was indeed a resistance in favor of

the liberties of England, which might have been endangered by success in the attempt against ours; and therefore a great man in your Parliament* did not scruple to declare, he *rejoiced that America had resisted.* I, for the same reason, may add this very resistance to the other instances of their loyalty. I have already said, that I think it just you should reward those Americans, who joined your troops in the war against their own country; but, if ever honesty could be inconsistent with policy, it is so in this instance. I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO MRS. MARY HEWSON.

Passy, 26 June, 1785.

DEAR FRIEND,

I wrote to you the 5th of last month, and have since received your kind letters of the 8th, informing me of your welfare, and that of the dear children, which gave me great pleasure. I shall long to see you all again in America, where I hope to be soon. Almost all my things are now packed up, and will be in the barge next Wednesday, to go down the river; for, though I know not yet what vessel I shall go in, I would have every thing at Havre ready to embark; and I suppose I shall not be here myself a fortnight longer.

I say nothing to persuade you to go with me or to follow me; because I know you do not usually act from persuasion, but from judgment; and, as that is very sound, I leave you to yourself. You will do what is best for you and yours, and that will give me most pleasure. Miss Lamotte's friends do not consent to

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* The first Lord Chatham.

her going to England. I enclose her letter, by which you will see, that, though she speaks the language prettily, she does not write it correctly. Indeed, abundance of the French are deficient in their own orthography. I offered her, as you desired, the money that might be necessary for the journey.

Temple is not yet quite well, having had several returns of his ague. Benjamin continues hearty, and has been very serviceable in packing. They both present their respects.

If you should write me a line before my departure, direct it to Havre de Grace. Adieu, my very dear friend, and believe me ever yours with sincerest respect and affection, B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. My love to every one of the children.

FROM RICHARD JACKSON TO B. FRANKLIN.

State of Affairs produced by the Peace. — Great Britain. — France. — East Indies.

London, 27 June, 1785.

MY DEAR SIR,

Though I wrote to you by your grandson, I cannot let Mr. Franklin, your son, visit you in France, without certifying my sincere good wishes, on your leaving Europe, that you may arrive safe, and long enjoy your health in America.*

You will arrive there deservedly covered with the glory of having had a large share in bringing about

* From this paragraph it would seem, that Governor Franklin designed to visit his father in France. But it does not appear that this design was accomplished. The father and son met at Northampton, when Dr. Franklin stopped there on his way to the United States.

an event, which I wish had not become necessary for the welfare of two great divisions of the English nation, or that, when it became so, it had been brought about with less profusion of blood and treasure. But the frame of human nature is inseparable from passions, that produce calamities, which the species will never be free from. It is, however, the part of the wise and good to afford that assistance to the species, which wisdom only can, and goodness only will give. I know I have no occasion to exhort you to this good work; but I have pleasure in assuring you, that I rely on the weight of your authority for establishing the opinion, that it is not only the interest of Great Britain and America to live upon good terms with one another, but that this friendship is perfectly compatible with a mutual friendship between France and both of them.

For my part, I entertain no apprehensions from the supposed ambition of that kingdom. It has frequently given proofs of its desire to preserve the peace of Europe, one very recent; and, except in the East Indies, the two kingdoms seem to have nothing to quarrel about. I except the East Indies, not because I think that either have any interest inconsistent with the interest of the other, but because I think it most likely, that one or the other may there mistake its interest. Sure I am, that it is the interest of Great Britain to make the trade of France perfectly easy there, and with such a secure and easy trade, I wish Great Britain could change situations with her ancient rival. Dominion at such a distance, and in a country where despotism seems the natural growth of the climate, cannot be well; and it cannot but in the end be mischievous to the State that possesses it, however the wealth it produces may force for a time the appear-

ance of affluence at home; an affluence that may aid pernicious measures, but, at last, must be destructive in its consequences.

I cannot take my leave of you, without congratulating you on the benefaction conferred on mankind by M. Necker. I have read more than once his excellent work; and some of the concluding chapters with ecstasy and tears. I flatter myself, that the princes of the earth will read it, and that some of them will be affected as I have been; and perhaps some of their ministers. I need not say, that many of his thoughts have been yours and my own, though I have never been able to express them with the elegance he has done.* In 1772, and 1777, I gave to Lord North two or three sheets; in the former year, on the subject of money; in the latter, on that of peace. The opinions therein contained, I now find confirmed by an authority that I respect without bounds. I am, my dear Sir, your affectionate and faithful servant,

RICHARD JACKSON.

FROM MATHON DE LA COUR TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

Lyons, 30 June, 1785.

SIR,

The Academy of Sciences, Belles Lettres, and Arts, of Lyons, informed by a letter from the Abbé Chalut,

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* Necker's treatise, entitled *Administration des Finances*, was published in 1784. It is stated in the *Biographie Universelle*, that eighty thousand copies were sold in a few days. The writer adds; "Jamais sujet aussi sérieux n'avait excité une curiosité aussi universelle. C'était sans doute une chose nouvelle dans les habitudes d'une monarchie absolue, que de voir un ministre en retraite publier solennellement qu'il se consolait des disgraces de la cour avec les suffrages de la nation."

that you would willingly accept the title of its associate, hastened to offer it to you by a unanimous vote, and charges me to inform you of your election. We all feel, and we feel deeply, how much honor a name like yours confers upon a literary society, whose principal object is the study of the natural sciences, upon which you have shed so much light, and in which, at every step, we meet monuments consecrated to your discoveries.

During the last years of my residence at Paris, my heart often beat with joy, when I had an opportunity of joining my applause to that, which all France seemed to think due to you, wherever you appeared. I am still more happy at this time, since I am requested, in the name of my fellow citizens, to add one modest flower to the wreaths with which you are crowned, and am allowed the personal gratification of offering to you the homage of my profound veneration. The Academy has directed me to send to you the list of its members, and a table of the prizes, which have hitherto been given. I shall venture to add a dissertation on the laws of Lycurgus, by the author of the *Testament de fortuné Ricard*, which you condescended to receive with kindness, and your approbation of which has filled him with the liveliest gratitude. I have the honor to be, &c.

MATHON DE LA COUR.

FROM THOMAS POWNALL TO B. FRANKLIN.

Political Remarks. — England. — America.

Lausanne, 3 July, 1785.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I received at Marseilles your letter by Mr. Partridge, respecting the nature of the account made out by the

editor and bookseller of my map and description of the States of America. I had already done in the matter every thing in my power when I was on the spot, and pressed the point stronger than I should have done, had it been for my account; but, when I considered it, as what I really wished, the doing an act of charity to the daughter of an ingenious and ill-treated man,* I exerted more pains about it than is my ordinary custom. I wished to make my intended charity as efficient and productive as possible. If I were on the spot I could not do more. I have prepared a second edition, with very many additions. If you will recommend to me any person who will translate it into French, I will publish this edition in France and give the whole profits to Evans's daughter.

I am told you are on the point of returning to your own country, a country which you have not only saved, but formed into a State, independent and sovereign. You must excuse me when I say what I feel, that I envy you. God has not only made you an instrument of good to your country, but has given you the most supreme of all happiness in this world, that of seeing your country and all the world acknowledging your deeds; that of, therefore, living to receive from their acknowledgments your reward in this world. It was your happiness to be in a situation of exerting your abilities in a line of politics, in which Providence had designed to lead the affairs of men.

I wished, in my line of conduct, to have served a country, which, alas! I could not, at least would not, believe was too far gone in corruption of all sorts, but especially in corruption of politics, to be served. This corruption sunk to ignorance and inspired with inso-

* Lewis Evans, the geographer.

lence the nation, and Providence gave it leaders and governors exactly calculated to lead it to its just punishment. But, whatever my habitual love to my native country was, I thank God I always had a feeling for the welfare of the *English nation*, which superseded all local considerations; and I am happy in my hopes, that real political liberty, with all its concomitant and consequent happiness, will be established in that branch of the English nation, which Providence planted and nurtured in America. Providence now holds this out to them, and may they have the temper and wisdom to see what is their real interest, or, at least, to take the advice of those who do see. If God grants you life and health, what a glorious scene in this great drama have you before you, in giving and persuading your country to take your advice, as to the settlement of their independence in a sovereignty *free and efficient* to all the purposes of liberty and their real interest. I have the pleasing consciousness to think, that my *Memoir** addressed to them, will not, when understood, be entirely useless and inefficient to those ends.

Adieu, my dear friend. You are going to a new world, formed to exhibit a scene which the old world never yet saw. You leave me here in the old world, which, like myself, begins to feel, as Asia hath felt, that it is wearing out apace. We shall never meet again on this earth; but there is another world, where we shall meet, and where we shall be understood, and those of us, who shall not have our reward here, will have it in all fulness there. If you receive this, pray let me hear from you before you depart, but more especially, if you have leisure, when you arrive at

* A tract entitled, "Memorial addressed to the Sovereigns of America," published, 1783.

home. Studying the state of this country, with reference to what I know (as the workman knows his own *metier*) of America, I see many things which might be useful for America to copy. A *temperate* spirit and a *homely* wisdom have established real liberty and actual happiness here, with surer and a longer permanency, than any other country ever yet enjoyed *in quiet.* I shall not neglect to collect these experiences with reference to America; and if I can communicate them to you, or to any one where I can be sure they will be of use, I will with pleasure do it; and the more so, as I find, that the very spirit and true foundation of the constitutions of this country have not been understood; first, by scribbling voyagers; and next, less so by speculating writers, who write from *system,* not from *fact.* Once more, my dear friend, adieu. May you have an easy passage, with as little pain as possible, and a happy arrival at your home. Remember your old and affectionate friend,

THOMAS POWNALL.

TO MRS. MARY HEWSON.

Leaves Passy. — Travels to Havre in the King's Litter.

Passy, 4 July, 1785.

DEAR FRIEND,

By this post I have given orders to engage a fine ship, now at London, to carry me and my family to Philadelphia. My baggage is already on the Seine, going down to Havre, from whence, if the captain cannot call for us there, we shall cross the channel, and meet him at Cowes, in the Isle of Wight. The ship has a large, convenient cabin, with good lodging-places. The whole to be at my disposition, and there

is plenty of room for you and yours. You may never have so good an opportunity of passing to America, if it is your intention. Think of it, and take your resolution; believing me ever your affectionate friend,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. Love to the dear children. If Mr. Williams is returned to London, he will inform you of the particulars. If not, you may inquire of Wallace, Johnson, and Muir, merchants, London, to be heard of at the Pennsylvania Coffee-House, Birchin Lane. The ship is to be at Cowes the 1st of August.

TO CLAUDIUS CRIGAN, BISHOP OF SODOR AND MAN.

Practicability and Expediency of establishing a Bishop in America.

Passy, 5 July, 1785.

MY LORD,

I received the too complaisant letter your Lordship did me the honor of writing to me by the Reverend Mr. Christian, who has also communicated some of your views for the benefit of religion in the United States of America, requesting my opinion, which I have given him, but will repeat in this letter, lest I should not in every particular have been rightly apprehended.

It is proper to be understood, that those States consist of thirteen distinct and separate sovereignties, each governed by its own laws, in which no one religious sect is established as predominant, but there is a general toleration of all; and, should any thing be enacted by one of them in favor of a particular sect, it would have no operation in the others. The Congress, though formed by delegates from each State chosen annually,

has powers extending only to those general affairs of political government, that relate to the whole, but no authority whatever is given to them in ecclesiastical matters. And I therefore think, they will do nothing, either to encourage or discourage the introduction of a bishop in America. For myself, I can only say as a private person, that I think such an officer may be of use to the Episcopalians, not only for the better government of their clergy, but for preventing the expense and risk that attend the sending of their young men to England for ordination. He should, however, have power to consecrate other bishops, so as to prevent for ever the necessity of sending to England for successors in that station, otherwise he will hardly be so well received.

The great difficulty will be to make proper provision for his support. I doubt whether any of the governments will establish such support, and I have not much confidence, that any thing considerable may be obtained by private contributions. My reasons are, that the Episcopalians in most of the States are very small in number, compared with the inhabitants of other persuasions; and, where they are a majority, they do not generally see the necessity or utility of a resident bishop, and they apprehend some inconvenience in it. Of this there was a strong instance in Virginia, some years before the late Revolution. The inhabitants of that Province were almost wholly of the Church of England, and their House of Commons of course the same. Yet that House unanimously censured, in strong terms, the proposition of some of their own clergy for introducing a bishop, and thanked others who opposed and defeated the project, as may be seen in the following extract from their Journal.

"Friday, July 12th, 1772. Resolved, *nemine contra-*

dicente, that the thanks of this House be given to the Reverend Mr. Henley, the Reverend Mr. Gwatkin, the Reverend Mr. Hewit, and the Reverend Mr. Bland, for the wise and well-timed opposition they have made to the *pernicious project* of a few mistaken clergymen for introducing an American bishop; a measure by which much disturbance, great anxiety and apprehension, would certainly take place among his Majesty's faithful American subjects, and that Mr. Richard Henry Lee and Mr. Bland do acquaint them therewith."

The apprehension mentioned in the Resolve, I imagine must have been an apprehension of expense to maintain a bishop suitable to his dignity, and of attempts to oblige the laity to defray such expense by taxes or tythes, or at least of their being solicited for voluntary contributions, there being at present no fund appointed for such purpose, nor any thing hitherto given but a farm, by legacy, in Rhode Island. If, however, the laity should have changed their minds, and wish now to have a bishop, whom they would engage to support by voluntary contributions, in that case, I imagine, none of the governments would forbid it, but the support would probably be too small and too precarious to be a sufficient encouragement.

Mr. Christian asked my opinion, whether your making a tour *incognito* through that country might not be a prudent measure? Whatever prospect or hope there may be of your greater usefulness to religion in our extensive country than in the little Isle of Man, yet, as you have a family, I certainly cannot advise your making any hasty application to your government for your removal, or taking any step that may hazard the loss of a present sure support against a contingent future and precarious. Therefore, to enable yourself to form a better judgment, it might be well to see

with your own eyes the state of things, and sound the disposition of the people; but I am nevertheless inclined to think, that, in making the tour, you will hardly be encouraged to attempt the change, unless the Society for Propagating the Gospel, or the British government, would fix a sufficient income to be paid you from England. Such a journey may, however, contribute to establish health, as well as pleasingly gratify the curiosity of seeing the progress, which the arts, agriculture, science, and industry are making in a new country. With great respect, I have the honor to be, &c.

B. Franklin.

TO GRANVILLE SHARP.

Law of Gavelkind. — Election of Bishops. — Abridged Liturgy.

Passy, 5 July, 1785.

Dear Sir,

I received the books you were so kind as to send me by Mr. Drown. Please to accept my hearty thanks. Your writings, which always have some public good for their object, I always read with pleasure. I am perfectly of your opinion, with respect to the salutary law of *gavelkind*, and hope it may in time be established throughout America. In six of the States, already, the lands of intestates are divided equally among the children, if all girls; but there is a double share given to the eldest son, for which I see no more reason, than giving such share to the eldest daughter; and I think there should be no distinction. Since my being last in France, I have seen several of our eldest sons, spending idly their fortunes by residing in Europe and neglecting their own country; these are from

the southern States. The northern young men stay at home, and are industrious, useful citizens; the more equal division of their fathers' fortunes not enabling them to ramble and spend their shares abroad, which is so much the better for their country.

I like your piece on the election of bishops. There is a fact in Holinshed's *Chronicles*, the latter part relating to Scotland, which shows, if my memory does not deceive me, that the first bishop in that country was elected by the clergy. I mentioned it some time past in a letter to two young men,* who asked my advice about obtaining ordination, which had been denied them by the bishops in England, unless they would take the oath of allegiance to the King; and I said, I imagine, that, unless a bishop is soon sent over with power to consecrate others, so that we may have no future occasion for applying to England for ordination, we may think it right, after reading your piece, to elect also.

The Liturgy you mention was an abridgment of that made by a noble Lord of my acquaintance, who requested me to assist him by taking the rest of the book, viz. the Catechism and the reading and singing Psalms. These I abridged by retaining of the Catechism only the two questions, *What is your duty to God? What is your duty to your neighbour?* with answers. The Psalms were much contracted by leaving out the repetitions (of which I found more than I could have imagined), and the imprecations, which appeared not to suit well the Christian doctrine of forgiveness of injuries, and doing good to enemies. The book was printed for Wilkie, in St. Paul's Church Yard, but never much noticed. Some were given away, very few sold, and I suppose the bulk became waste paper.

* See the Letter to Messrs. Weems and Gant, July 18th, 1784.

In the prayers so much was retrenched, that approbation could hardly be expected; but I think, with you, a moderate abridgment might not only be useful, but generally acceptable.*

I am now on the point of departing for America where I shall be glad occasionally to hear from you, and of your welfare; being with sincere and great esteem, dear Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant, B. Franklin.

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* On this subject Mr. Sharp had written as follows. "I have been informed, that, several years ago, you revised the Liturgy of the Church of England, with a view, by some few alterations, to promote the more general use of it; but I have never yet been able to see a copy of the form you proposed. Our present public service is certainly, upon the whole, much too long, as it is commonly used, so that a prudent revision of it, by the common consent of the members of the Episcopal Church in America, might be very advantageous; though, for my own part, I conceive, that the addition of one single rubric from the Gospel would be amply sufficient to direct the advisers to the only corrections that seem to be necessary at present. I mean a *general rule*, illustrated by proper examples, references, and marks, to warn officiating ministers how they may avoid all useless repetitions, and tautology in reading the service." — *London, June 17th*, 1785.

The title of the volume, alluded to in the text, is as follows. "*Abridgement of the Book of Common Prayer, and Administration of the Sacraments, and other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church, according to the Use of the Church of England; together with the Psalter, or Psalms of David, pointed as they are to be sung or said in Churches. London; printed in the Year* MDCCLXXIII." The "noble Lord," who is mentioned as having aided in preparing this volume, was Lord Le Despencer. In the summer of 1773, Dr. Franklin passed some time with Lord Le Despencer, at his residence in the country, and it was probably during this visit that the work was completed. The *Preface* is wholly from the pen of Dr. Franklin, and is evidently a studied composition. It is interesting and curious, as exhibiting his views, more fully than they are anywhere else to be found, on the subject of public worship, and the best forms to be adopted in conducting it. The Preface is here printed from a copy of the volume, that formerly belonged to Bishop White, and was presented to him by Dr. Franklin's daughter. A large part of it is extant in Dr. Franklin's handwriting.

"Preface.

"The editor of the following abridgment of the Liturgy of the Church of England thinks it but decent and respectful to all, more particularly

TO DAVID HARTLEY.

Passy, 5 July, 1785.

I cannot quit the coasts of Europe without taking leave of my ever dear friend Mr. Hartley. We were long fellow laborers in the best of all works, the work of peace. I leave you still in the field, but, having finished my day's task, I am going home *to go to bed.* Wish me a good night's rest, as I do you a pleasant evening. Adieu! and believe me ever yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN,
in his eightieth year.

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to the reverend body of clergy, who adorn the Protestant religion by their good works, preaching, and example, that he should humbly offer some reasons for such an undertaking. He addresses himself to the serious and discerning. He professes himself to be a Protestant of the Church of England, and holds in the highest veneration the doctrines of Jesus Christ. He is a sincere lover of social worship, deeply sensible of its usefulness to society; and he aims at doing some service to religion, by proposing such abbreviations and omissions in the forms of our Liturgy (retaining every thing he thinks essential) as might, if adopted, procure a more general attendance. For, besides the differing sentiments of many pious and well-disposed persons in some speculative points, who in general have a good opinion of our Church, it has often been observed and complained of, that the Morning and Evening Service, as practised in England and elsewhere, are so long, and filled with so many repetitions, that the continued attention suitable to so serious a duty becomes impracticable, the mind wanders, and the fervency of devotion is slackened. Also the propriety of saying the same prayer more than once in the same service is doubted, as the service is thereby lengthened without apparent necessity; our Lord having given us a short prayer as an example, and censured the heathen for thinking to be heard because of much speaking.

"Moreover, many pious and devout persons, whose age or infirmities will not suffer them to remain for hours in a cold church, especially in the winter season, are obliged to forego the comfort and edification they would receive by their attendance on divine service. These, by shortening the time, would be relieved; and the younger sort, who have had some principles of religion instilled into them, and who have been educated in a belief of the necessity of adoring their Maker, would probably more frequently, as well as cheerfully, attend divine service, if they were not detained so long at any one time. Also many well disposed tradesmen, shopkeepers, artificers, and others, whose habitations

TO MATHON DE LA COUR.

Passy, 9 July, 1785.

SIR,

I have received the letter, which you did me the honor to write in the name of the Academy of the city of Lyons. I accept with gratitude the title, with

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are not remote from churches, could, and would, more frequently at least, find time to attend divine service on other than Sundays, if the prayers were reduced into a much narrower compass.

"Formerly there were three services performed at different times of the day, which three services are now usually joined in one. This may suit the conveniency of the person who officiates, but is too often inconvenient and tiresome to the congregation. If this abridgment, therefore, should ever meet with acceptance, the well disposed clergy, who are laudably desirous to encourage the *frequency* of divine service, may promote so great and good a purpose, by repeating it three times on a Sunday, without so much fatigue to themselves as at present. Suppose, at nine o'clock, at eleven, and at one in the evening; and by preaching no more sermons than usual, of a moderate length; and thereby accommodate a greater number of people with convenient hours.

"These were general reasons for wishing and proposing an abridgment. In attempting it we do not presume to dictate even to a single Christian. We are sensible there is a proper authority in the rulers of the Church for ordering such matters; and whenever the time shall come when it may be thought not unseasonable to revise our Liturgy, there is no doubt but every suitable improvement will be made, under the care and direction of so much learning, wisdom, and piety, in one body of men collected. Such a work as this must then be much better executed. In the mean time, this humble performance may serve to show the practicability of shortening the service near one half, without the omission of what is essentially necessary; and we hope, moreover, that the book may be occasionally of some use to families, or private assemblies of Christians.

"To give now some account of particulars. We have presumed upon this plan of abridgment to omit the First Lesson, which is taken from the Old Testament, and retain only the Second from the New Testament; which, we apprehend, is more suitable to teach the so-much-to-be-revered doctrine of Christ, and of more immediate importance to Christians; although the Old Testament is allowed by all to be an accurate and concise history, and, as such, may more properly be read at home.

"We do not conceive it necessary for Christians to make use of more than one Creed. Therefore in this abridgment are omitted the

which this learned Society is kind enough to honor me. I have long been acquainted with its useful labors. I should be most happy to live near it, and reap the benefit of its instruction. But, being on the eve of my departure for America, I must add this also to the

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Nicene Creed, and that of St. Athanasius. Of the Apostles' Creed we have retained the parts that are most intelligible and most essential. And as the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost*, are there confessedly and avowedly a part of the belief, it does not appear necessary after so solemn a confession, to repeat again, in the Litany, the *Son* and *Holy Ghost*, as that part of the service is otherwise very prolix.

"The Psalms, being a collection of Odes, written by different persons, it hath happened that many of them are on the same subject, and repeat the same sentiments; such as those that complain of enemies and persecutors, call upon God for protection, express a confidence therein, and thank him for it when afforded. A very great part of the book consists of repetitions of this kind, which may therefore well bear abridgment. Other parts are merely historical, repeating the mention of facts more fully narrated in the preceding books, and which, relating to the ancestors of the Jews, were more interesting to them than to us. Other parts are *local*, and allude to places of which we have no knowledge, and therefore do not affect us. Others are *personal*, relating to the particular circumstances of David or Solomon, as kings; and can therefore seldom be rehearsed with any propriety by private Christians. Others imprecate, in the most bitter terms, the vengeance of God on our adversaries, contrary to the spirit of Christianity, which commands us to love our enemies, and to pray for those that hate us, and despitefully use us. For these reasons it is to be wished, that the same liberty were, by the governors of our Church, allowed to the minister with regard to the *reading Psalms*, as is taken by the clerk, with regard to those that are to be sung, in directing the parts that he may judge most suitable to be read at the time, from the present circumstances of the congregation, or the tenor of his sermon, by saying, 'Let us *read*' such and such parts of the Psalms named. Until this is done, our abridgment, it is hoped, will be found to contain what may be most generally proper to be joined in by an assembly of Christian people. The Psalms are still apportioned to the days of the month, as heretofore though the several parts for each day are generally a full third shorter

"We humbly suppose the same service contained in this abridgment might properly serve for all the Saints' Days, Fasts, and Feasts, reading only the Epistle and Gospel appropriated to each day of the month.

"The Communion is greatly abridged, on account of its great length; nevertheless, it is hoped and believed, that all those parts are retained which are material and necessary.

Infant Baptism in Churches being performed during divine service

many sources of regret, which the kindness of the French calls forth in my heart. I shall never forget what I owe to them, still less what I owe to your Academy, to the members of which I beg you to present my respectful acknowledgments.

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would greatly add to the length of that service, if it were not abridged. We have ventured, therefore, to leave out the less material parts.

"The Catechism, as a compendium of systematic theology, which learned divines have written folio volumes to explain, and which, therefore, it may be presumed, they thought scarce intelligible without such expositions, is, perhaps, taken altogether, not so well adapted to the capacities of children as might be wished. Only those plain answers, therefore, which express our duty towards God, and our duty towards our neighbour, are retained here. The rest is recommended to their reading and serious consideration, when more years shall have ripened their understanding.

"The Confirmation is here shortened.

"The Commination, and all cursing of mankind, is, we think, best omitted in this abridgment.

"The form of solemnization of Matrimony is often abbreviated by the officiating minister, at his discretion. We have selected what appear to us the material parts, and which, we humbly hope, will be deemed sufficient.

"The long prayers in the service for the Visitation of the Sick seem not so proper, when the afflicted person is very weak and in distress.

"The Order for the Burial of the Dead is very solemn and moving; nevertheless, to preserve the health and lives of the living, it appeared to us that this service ought particularly to be shortened. For numbers standing in the open air with their hats off, often in tempestuous weather, during the celebration, its great length is not only inconvenient, but may be dangerous to the attendants. We hope, therefore, that our abridgment of it will be approved by the rational and prudent.

"The Thanksgiving of women after childbirth being, when read, part of the service of the day, we have also, in some measure, abridged that.

"Having thus stated very briefly our motives and reasons, and our manner of proceeding in the prosecution of this work, we hope to be believed, when we declare the rectitude of our intentions. We mean not to lessen or prevent the practice of religion, but to honor and promote it. We acknowledge the excellency of our present Liturgy, and, though we have shortened it, we have not presumed to alter a word in the remaining text; not even to substitute *who* for *which* in the Lord's Prayer, and elsewhere, although it would be more correct. We respect the characters of bishops and other dignitaries of our Church, and, with regard to the inferior clergy, we wish that they were more equally

I thank you, Sir, for your Dissertation on the Laws of Lycurgus, and your *Testament de fortuné Ricard.** With the latter work I was already acquainted. I had read it with pleasure, and conceived a high opinion of its author. I have just read your Dissertation. If my own approbation could add any thing to that of the celebrated Academy, which has awarded to you the prize, I should tell you, that I have been highly gratified, and that I only regret I can give you no other prize, than the sentiments of regard and respect, with which I am, Sir, &c. B. FRANKLIN.†

FROM M. DE CASTRIES TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

Versailles, 10 July, 1785.

SIR,

I was not apprized, until within a few hours, of the arrangements which you have made for your departure. Had I been informed of it sooner, I should have proposed to the King to order a frigate to convey you to your own country, in a manner suitable to the known importance of the services you have been engaged in, to the esteem you have acquired in

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provided for, than by that odious and vexatious, as well as unjust method, of gathering tythes in kind, which creates animosities and litigations, to the interruption of the good harmony and respect, which might otherwise subsist between the rectors and their parishioners.

"And thus, conscious of upright meaning, we submit this abridgment to the serious consideration of the prudent and dispassionate, and not to enthusiasts and bigots; being convinced in our own breasts, that this shortened method, or one of the same kind better executed, would further religion, increase unanimity, and occasion a more frequent attendance on the worship of God."

* A translation of this curious piece was published by Dr. Price in London, as an Appendix to his *Observations on the Importance of the American Revolution.*

† This letter is translated from a French copy.

France, and the particular esteem which his Majesty entertains for you.

I pray you, Sir, to accept my regrets, and the renewed assurance of the most entire consideration, with which I have the honor to be, Sir, your very humble and very obedient servant,

DE CASTRIES.*

* Extract from a letter to his sister in America.

"*St. Germain, twelve miles from Paris, 13th July,* 1785. I left Passy yesterday afternoon, and am here on my way to Havre de Grace, a seaport, in order to embark for America. I make use of one of the King's litters, carried by mules, which walk steadily and easily, so that I bear the motion very well. I am to be taken on board a Philadelphia ship on the coast of England, (Captain Truxtun,) the beginning of next month. Not having written to you since the letter, which contained a bill on Mr. Vernon, and as I may not have another opportunity before my arrival in Philadelphia (if it pleases God I do arrive), I write these particulars to go by way of England, that you may be less uneasy about me. I did my last public act in this country just before I set out, which was signing a treaty of amity and commerce with Prussia. I have continued to work till late in the day; it is time I should go home and go to bed."

CORRESPONDENCE,

PART FOURTH;

COMPRISING

PRIVATE LETTERS,

FROM

THE TERMINATION OF THE AUTHOR'S MISSION TO FRANCE

TO

THE END OF HIS LIFE.

1785—1790,

CORRESPONDENCE.

TO BENJAMIN VAUGHAN.

Southampton, 8 o'clock, A. M., 24 July, 1785.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

I am this minute arrived here with my family from Havre de Grace; and shall stay here till Captain Truxtun arrives at Cowes to take us in.* I write this line, just to inform you, that I bore the journey to Havre, in one of the King's litters, very well, and the voyage also from thence hither in forty-five hours, though the wind was a great part of the time contrary. I shall be glad of a line from you, acquainting me whether you ever received two pieces I sent you some months since; one on your penal laws, the other an account

* Thomas Truxtun, distinguished in the naval annals of the United States, was born on Long Island, February 17th, 1755. He manifested an early predilection for the sea, and made his first voyage when he was twelve years old. During a part of the Revolution he commanded several private armed vessels, in which he was successful in annoying the enemy's commerce, particularly on the coast of England. He signalized himself for courage and skill in two or three engagements. When the navy was revived, on the prospect of a war with France, in 1794, Truxtun was one of the six captains first nominated by Washington to the Senate. He superintended the building of the frigate *Constellation*, with which, and a small squadron under his command, he was employed in protecting the American commerce in the West Indies. It was here that he fought his celebrated action with the French frigate *Insurgente*, on the 9th of February, 1799. After an engagement of an hour and a quarter the *Insurgente* struck her colors. This vessel carried forty guns, and four hundred and seventeen men; of whom twenty-nine were killed and forty-four wounded. The *Constellation* carried thirty-six guns, and had but one man killed and two wounded. The gallantry displayed by Commodore Truxtun on this occasion was highly applauded.

of the residence of an English seaman in China.* As you commonly said something to me concerning the things I used to send you, I apprehend you either have not received these, or do not like them. If you have any thing to say by me to your friends in America, send it, and I will take care to deliver it. Adieu, my dearest friend. I am ever yours,

B. FRANKLIN.†

FROM JONATHAN SHIPLEY, BISHOP OF ST. ASAPH, TO B. FRANKLIN.

Twyford, 24 July, 1785.

MY EVER DEAR FRIEND,

The first emotion of my heart is, to thank Heaven, that you are once more so near me, and that I shall have the happiness of seeing you in a few hours. Some of our good friends are come most untimely to dine with us. As soon as we are rid of them, my wife, and I, and the only daughter that is now with us, will hasten to welcome you, and to enjoy, till the last moment of your departure, as much of the blessing of your conversation, as we can without being tiresome. Adieu, till seven or eight in the evening. I will leave directions to hasten Mr. Williams. Ever yours,

J. ST. ASAPH.

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* See Vol. II. pp. 241, 478.

† He wrote also from Southampton to Dr. Lettsom as follows. "Dear Sir; I received here your kind letter, and the valuable present of Dr. Fothergill's Works; for which please to accept my grateful acknowledgments. I purpose, on my voyage, to write the remaining notes of my life, which you desire, and to send them to you on my arrival You have done a good deed in contributing to promote science among us, by your liberal donation of books to Carlisle College. Thanks for your good wishes in favor of our country, and of your friend and servant." — *July 26th.*

TO MRS. MARY HEWSON.

Southampton, 26 July, 1785.

DEAR FRIEND,

I received here yours of the 23d instant. I am sorry it did not suit you to go in the ship with me, having engaged places in the cabin, that would have accommodated you and yours, not indeed on your account, because I never depended on your going; but I took the whole cabin, that I might not be intruded on by any accidental disagreeable company.

If you come to Philadelphia, you will find an always affectionate friend in me, and in my children after I am gone. My love to yours, and to Dolly; and my respects to Mrs. Hawkesworth. I came to Havre de Grace in a litter, and hither in the packet-boat; and, instead of being hurt by the journey or voyage, I really find myself very much better, not having suffered so little for the time these two years past.

Adieu, my dear friend; accept my repeated thanks for the agreeable winter your kind company, with that of my young friends, made me pass, and believe me ever yours most sincerely and most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM MISS CATHERINE LOUISA SHIPLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

Twyford, 2 August, 1785.

MY DEAR GOOD FRIEND,

You gave me leave to write to you, and I take the first opportunity of profiting by your indulgence. I do assure you, we all left your ship with a heavy heart; but the taking leave was a scene we wished to save you as well as ourselves. God grant you may have

a good voyage; it is our constant *toast* every day at dinner. I was quite provoked with myself, when I got to Southampton, that I had not thought of something to leave with you, that might have been useful during the voyage, to remind you of me. You produced a *housewife;* possibly you had no *pincushion;* how happy would it have made me to have given you one. Did you ever taste the ginger cake, and think it had belonged to your fellow traveller? In short, I want some excuse for asking, whether you ever think about me.

We are for ever talking of our good friend; something is perpetually occurring to remind us of the time spent with you. We never walk in the garden, without seeing *Dr. Franklin's room*, and thinking of the work that was begun in it.* I have sincerely wished you a *good* voyage, but since the completion of *that work* depends on its length, I cannot wish it may be *short.* I had a letter from Emily the night after I got home, to inquire whether your stay at Southampton would allow time for her coming to see you. Bessy regretted much that she lost that happiness. I have written to dear Georgiana a long account of you, for I know every circumstance will be interesting to her.† Indeed, my dear Sir, from my father and mother down to their *youngest child*, we all respect and love you. I have not sent the verses, because I intend to make them an excuse for troubling you with another letter. Believe me, my dear good friend, most affectionately yours, CATHERINE LOUISA SHIPLEY.

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* It was in this room that Dr. Franklin wrote the first part of the Memoirs of his life, in the year 1771.

† Georgiana Shipley was married to a Mr. Hare, and was at this time residing in Italy.

FROM DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

London, 24 August, 1785.

My dear Friend,

I thank you for your last kind remembrance of me from Southampton. I was very unfortunately absent in the country for the two days, in which I could have had the pleasure of seeing you at Southampton, had I heard of your being there. I heard it in London, on Wednesday afternoon, the 27th of July. I got within a mile of Southampton the next morning, and met the Bishop of St. Asaph, who had just left you on board and under sail.

I greatly regret my disappointment. We were three of us, all of one name, and of one affection and respect for you; though I must still claim the preëminence in this above my relations, having had the happiness of knowing you most. Although we are separated, yet I hope you know me too well, not to remain always assured, that I shall for ever continue united with you in our favorite pursuit of promoting good will and a good understanding between our two countries, as the probable means of securing durable peace, that best of human blessings. I hope you will remember me, when you arrive in your own country, and that you will always consider me as an unalterable friend to peace and justice, and for ever your friend and well-wisher.

My brother and sister desire to be most kindly remembered to you, as likewise my cousin, Mr. Samuel Hartley, whom you know; and his brother, Colonel James Hartley, desires to join, from his respect to your character, though he never had the pleasure of seeing you. I hope you will favor me with your correspondence, particularly upon any interesting public

events. I ask this of you, as a joint friend of amity and peace between our two countries. God bless you in health and happiness. Your ever most affectionate friend, D. HARTLEY.

TO JOHN JAY.

Giving Information of his Return to the United States. — Court of France.

Philadelphia, 19 September, 1785.

SIR,

I have the honor to acquaint you, that I left Paris the 12th of July, and, agreeably to the permission of Congress, am returned to my own country. Mr. Jefferson had recovered his health, and was much esteemed and respected there. Our joint letters have already informed you of our late proceedings, to which I have nothing to add, except that the last act I did, as Minister Plenipotentiary for making treaties, was to sign with him, two days before I came away, the treaty of friendship, and commerce that had been agreed on with Prussia,* and which was to be carried to the Hague, by Mr. Short, there to be signed by Baron Thulemeier on the part of the King, who, without the least hesitation, had approved and conceded to the new humane articles proposed by Congress. Mr. Short was also to call at London for the signature of Mr. Adams, who I learned, when at Southampton, was well received at the British court.

The Captain Lamb, who, in a letter of yours to Mr. Adams, was said to be coming to us with in-

* See this Treaty at large in the public *Journals of Congress*, Vol. IV p. 639.

structions respecting Morocco, had not appeared, nor had we heard any thing of him; so nothing had been done by us in that treaty.

I left the court of France in the same friendly disposition towards the United States, that we have all along experienced, though concerned to find, that our credit is not better supported in the payment of the interest money due on our loans, which, in case of another war, must be, they think, extremely prejudicial to us, and indeed may contribute to draw on a war the sooner, by affording our enemies the encouraging confidence, that those who take so little care to pay, will not again find it easy to borrow. I received from the King, at my departure, the present of his picture set round with diamonds, usually given to ministers plenipotentiary, who have signed any treaties with that court; and it is at the disposition of Congress, to whom be pleased to present my dutiful respects. I am, with great esteem and regard, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. Not caring to trust them to a common conveyance, I send by my late secretary, who will have the honor of delivering them to you, all the original treaties I have been concerned in negotiating, that were completed. Those with Portugal and Denmark continue in suspense.*

* Dr. Franklin left Passy on the 12th of July, and proceeded by way of Havre to Southampton in England. He sailed from Cowes on the 28th of July, and arrived in Philadelphia on the 14th of September. M. Houdon was a passenger in the same ship. For the Addresses of various public bodies to Dr. Franklin after his arrival, and his Answers, see Vol. V. pp. 137–141.

TO GEORGE WASHINGTON.

Introducing M. Houdon, the Artist.

Philadelphia, 20 September, 1785.

DEAR SIR,

I am just arrived from a country, where the reputation of General Washington runs very high, and where everybody wishes to see him in person; but, being told that it is not likely he ever will favor them with a visit, they hope at least for a sight of his perfect resemblance by means of their principal statuary, M. Houdon, whom Mr. Jefferson and myself agreed with to come over for the purpose of taking a bust, in order to make the intended statue for the State of Virginia. He is here, but, the materials and instruments he sent down the Seine from Paris not being arrived at Havre when we sailed, he was obliged to leave them, and is now busied in supplying himself here. As soon as that is done, he proposes to wait on you in Virginia, as he understands there is no prospect of your coming hither, which would indeed make me very happy; as it would give me an opportunity of congratulating with you personally on the final success of your long and painful labors, in the service of our country, which have laid us all under eternal obligations. With the greatest and most sincere esteem and respect, I am, dear Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.*

* M. Houdon went to Mount Vernon, where he remained three weeks, and modelled a bust of General Washington, as exact in all its lineaments as his skill could make it. From this model was executed the statue of Washington, which was procured by the State of Virginia, and placed in the Capitol at Richmond. See SPARKS's *Life of Washington*, p. 390

TO WILLIAM GREENE, GOVERNOR OF RHODE ISLAND, AND MRS. GREENE.

Philadelphia, 20 September, 1785.

I seize this first opportunity of acquainting my dear friends, that I have once more the great happiness of being at home in my own country, and with my family, because I know it will give you pleasure. I shall be glad to hear of your welfare, also, and beg you to favor me with a line, and let me know particularly how my young friend Ray does.

I enjoy, thanks to God, as much good health as can reasonably be expected at my time of life; and am ever, with sincere esteem, my dear friends, yours most affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

FROM M. DE MARBOIS TO B. FRANKLIN.

Congratulates him on his Return to America.

Translation.

New York, 21 September, 1785.

SIR,

It is with the greatest satisfaction, that I have the honor to congratulate you on your happy return to your own country. As a Frenchman, it is with some degree of pain, that I reflect on the necessity, which has caused you again to join your fellow citizens, who have desired to see you among them; but the six years that I have passed in this country, and the ties I have formed here,* have made me so much an American, that I participate most sincerely in the joy, which all the world is expressing at your return.

* M. de Marbois had married an American lady of Philadelphia.

I am on the point of departing for St. Domingo, and am extremely sorry, that the short time remaining before that event deprives me of the pleasure of paying my respects to you in person at Philadelphia. I shall sail in three or four days, and shall be happy to execute any orders with which you may favor me. I am, &c. DE MARBOIS.

TO JOHN JAY AND MRS. JAY.*

Philadelphia, 21 September, 1785.

DEAR FRIENDS,

I received your very kind letter of the 16th, congratulating me on my safe arrival with my grandsons; an event that indeed makes me very happy, being what I have long ardently wished, and, considering the growing infirmities of age, began almost to despair of. I am now in the bosom of my family, and find four new little prattlers, who cling about the knees of their grandpapa, and afford me great pleasure. The affectionate welcome I met with from my fellow citizens was far beyond my expectation.

I bore my voyage very well, and find myself rather better for it, so that I have every possible reason to be satisfied with my having undertaken and performed it. When I was at Passy, I could not bear a wheel carriage; and, being discouraged in my project of de-

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* As soon as Mr. Jay heard of Dr. Franklin's arrival, he wrote to him as follows.

"Dear Sir; I had this moment the satisfaction of seeing, in a Pennsylvania newspaper, an account of your safe arrival with your grandsons at Philadelphia. Accept Mrs. Jay's and my sincere and cordial congratulations on this happy event; and our best wishes, that the same kind Providence, which has restored you to your country, may long bless you with health and prosperity in it."—*New York, September 16th*, 1785.

scending the Seine in a boat, by the difficulties and tediousness of its navigation in so dry a season, I accepted the offer of one of the King's litters, carried by large mules, which brought me well, though in walking slowly, to Havre. Thence I went over in a packet-boat to Southampton, where I stayed four days, till the ship came for me to Spithead. Several of my London friends came there to see me, particularly the good Bishop of St. Asaph and family, who stayed with me to the last. In short, I am now so well as to think it possible, that I may once more have the pleasure of seeing you both perhaps at New York, with my dear young friends (who I hope may not have quite forgotten me); for I imagine, that on the sandy road between Burlington and Amboy I could bear an easy coach, and the rest is water. I rejoice to hear that you continue well, being with true and great esteem and affection your most obedient servant,

B. Franklin.

FROM GEORGE WASHINGTON TO B. FRANKLIN.

Mount Vernon, 25 September, 1785.

Dear Sir,

Amid the public gratulations on your safe return to America, after a long absence and the many eminent services you have rendered it, for which as a benefited person I feel the obligation, permit an individual to join the public voice in expressing a sense of them; and to assure you, that, as no one entertains more respect for your character, so no one can salute you with more sincerity or with greater pleasure, than I do on the occasion. With the highest regard and greatest consideration, I am, dear Sir, &c.

George Washington.

FROM GEORGE WASHINGTON TO B. FRANKLIN.

Mount Vernon, 26 September, 1785.

DEAR SIR,

I had just written, and was about to put into the hands of Mr. Taylor, a gentleman in the department of the Secretary of Foreign Affairs, the enclosed letter, when I had the honor to receive by post your favor of the 20th instant. I have a grateful sense of the partiality of the French nation towards me, and feel very sensibly the indulgent expression of your letter, which does me great honor.

When it suits M. Houdon to come hither, I will accommodate him in the best manner I am able, and shall endeavour to render his stay as agreeable as I can. It would give me infinite pleasure to see you At this place I dare not look for it; though to entertain you under my own roof would be doubly gratifying. When or whether I shall ever have the satisfaction of seeing you at Philadelphia is uncertain, as retirement from the public walks of life has not been so productive of leisure and ease as might have been expected. With very great esteem and respect, I am, dear Sir, your most obedient, &c.

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

FROM JOHN JAY TO B. FRANKLIN.

New York, 4 October, 1785.

DEAR SIR,

Your grandson, whom it gave me great pleasure to see, delivered to me a few days ago your kind letter of the 21st of last month. Your being again with your family, the manner in which the French court parted with you, the attention you experienced from your

English friends, and the reception you met with from your fellow citizens, are circumstances that must give you great satisfaction.

It strikes me, that you will find it somewhat difficult to manage the two parties in Pennsylvania; it is much to be wished, that union and harmony may be reëstablished there, and, if you accomplish it, much honor and many blessings will result from it. Unless you do it, I do not know who can; for, independent of experience and talents, you possess their confidence, and your advice and measures must derive very great weight from the reputation and consideration you enjoy.

Why your letters, respecting your grandson, have not been more efficacious, I cannot explain. The appointment of persons in the foreign department, has in no instance been referred to me, for my advice or opinion. Jealousy of power and influence in individuals as well as bodies of men, seems to characterize the spirit of the times, and has much operation both on men and measures.

We are happy to find, that you think of visiting New York. By the road from Burlington to Amboy which is smooth and but short, you might doubtless come with very little inconvenience, especially as you may travel at your leisure, and take as many days as your ease and the weather may require. Mrs. Jay is exceedingly pleased with this idea, and sincerely joins with me in wishing to see it realized. Her attachments are strong, and that to you, being founded in esteem and the recollection of kind offices, is particularly so. I suspect your little friend has forgotten your person; your name is familiar to her, as indeed it will be to every generation. With the best wishes, I am, dear Sir, your obliged and affectionate servant,

JOHN JAY.

FROM M. LE VEILLARD TO B. FRANKLIN.

Rumor of Dr. Franklin's being captured by the Algerines. — Cardinal Rohan and the Diamond Necklace. — Mademoiselle Brillon.

Translation.

Passy, 9 October, 1785.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

We are waiting with the greatest impatience to hear from you. The newspapers have given us anxiety on your account; for some of them insist that you have been taken by the Algerines, while others pretend that you are at Morocco, enduring your slavery with all the patience of a philosopher. These reports luckily have not been confirmed; but we shall not be entirely at our ease until we see your handwriting, dated at Philadelphia. You cannot imagine how sad we have felt ever since you have left us, and how often we speak of you. This we shall never cease to do. There is even poor Castor, who never knows what to do with himself on Sunday mornings.

We have again for a moment had fears of a war with the Emperor. He had some difficulty in coming to a final settlement with the Dutch; but, fortunately, all is at last concluded and signed. The King of Prussia, moreover, who is in a fine position at this moment, is at the head of a confederacy of almost all the States of Germany, to resist all attempts at aggrandizement on the part of the Emperor. As to your countrymen, have they at last found a solid basis on which to rest their fabric? Can they sustain their liberty? Certainly they have great need of your wise counsels.

You will be astonished to hear, that we have just

arrested in his full dress, and sent to the Bastille, a cardinal,* who is a prince and bishop of Strasburg. This cardinal, who has an income of more than twelve hundred thousand livres, took from a jeweller's on credit, and on the Queen's account, a diamond necklace, worth one million six hundred thousand livres. Accused by her before the King, he has produced a note, which, as he pretends, he believed to have been written and signed by her. His trial is going on before the Parliament of Paris, and his sentence will be pronounced after the vacation. He is in the uncomfortable dilemma of being able to prove that he is not a knave, only by proving that he is a fool.

Mademoiselle Brillon is to be married on the 20th of this month to M. Viasal de Malachet, son of one of the King's secretaries. He is a counsellor at the Court of Aids, and is to leave that business to take the office of M. Brillon, with whom the young couple are to live. Your friends can never cease to regret your absence. I am asked about you ten times a day. They all send you their affectionate regards. I hope you have been industrious during your passage, and that you have finished your Memoirs and will send them to me.† My wife and daughter unite with me, and we all beg you to remember, that nobody in the world loves you more affectionately than we do.

LE VEILLARD.

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* The Cardinal de Rohan.

† The first part of the Memoirs of his life, written in England, Dr. Franklin had communicated to M. le Veillard, who is supposed to have been the author of the French translation.

FROM JOHN FITCH TO B. FRANKLIN.

Concerning a new Steamboat.

Bucks County, 12 October, 1785.

SIR,

The subscriber begs leave to trouble you with something further on the subject of a steamboat. His sanguine opinion in favor of its answering the purpose to his utmost wishes, emboldens him to presume this letter will not give offence. And if his opinion carries him to excess, he doubts not but your Excellency will make proper allowance.

It is a matter, in his opinion, of the first magnitude, not only to the United States, but to every maritime power in the world; and he is full in the belief, that it will answer for sea voyages as well as for inland navigation, in particular for packets, where there may be a great number of passengers. He is also of opinion, that fuel for a short voyage would not exceed the weight of water for a long one, and it would produce a constant supply of fresh water. He also believes, that the boat would make head against the most violent tempests, and thereby escape the danger of a lee shore; and that the same force may be applied to a pump to free a leaky ship of her water. What emboldens him to be thus presuming, as to the good effects of the machine, is the almost omnipotent force by which it is actuated, and the very simple, easy, and natural way by which the screws or paddles are turned to answer the purpose of oars.

I expect to return from Kentucky about the 1st of June next, and nothing would give me more pleasure than to make an essay under your patronage, and have your friendly assistance in introducing another

useful art into the world. With the most perfect respect, I am, &c.

JOHN FITCH.*

FROM GAETANO FILANGIERI TO B. FRANKLIN.

Sending to Dr. Franklin a Copy of his Work on Legislation.

Translation.

Dalla Cava, 24 October, 1785.

SIR,

The publication of three more volumes of my work affords me a new opportunity of testifying to you my respect, and the attention due from me.† Your return to America, so glorious to yourself, and the great distance which separates us, far from exempting me from this duty, only render the fulfilment of it the more praiseworthy, by the difficulties and the obstacles which

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* It appears by the following certificate, which was given two years after the above letter was written, that Mr. Fitch attained to some degree of success in the construction of his steamboat.

"*Philadelphia, December 12th*, 1787. These may certify, that the subscriber has frequently seen Mr. Fitch's steamboat, which, with great labor and perseverance he has at length completed, and has likewise been on board when the boat was worked against both wind and tide with a very considerable degree of velocity by the force of steam only. Mr. Fitch's merit in constructing a good steam-engine, and applying it to so useful a purpose, will no doubt meet with the encouragement he so justly deserves from the generosity of his countrymen, especially those who wish to promote every improvement of the useful arts in America. "DAVID RITTENHOUSE."

† Alluding to his great work on the *Science of Legislation*, the first two volumes of which were published in 1780, the two following in 1783, and three others in 1785. Cava, the place at which the above letter is dated, is a small village eight leagues from Naples, to which the author had retired, that he might apply himself uninterruptedly to the composition of this work, one of the most extraordinary of its kind,

are to be surmounted. I send you at present but a single copy of these three volumes, because I do not know, nor have I been able to ascertain from Signor Pio, how many copies of the former volumes of my work he has forwarded. You have only to inform me of the number, and to give me the address of the person in France to whom the packet is to be directed, and I will immediately send a similar number of copies of the volumes just published. These contain the fourth book of the work, which has for its subject the laws which concern *education, manners, and public instruction.* My ideas on these subjects are certainly new, but are they sound? As to this point, it belongs to you, more than to any one else, to decide.

May you enjoy, Sir, the laurels to which your talents and your virtues so well entitle you. The blessings, invoked on your name by a great nation, are the only reward worthy of the author of their liberty and the avenger of their wrongs. God grant, that your years may be prolonged according to the wishes and

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in regard both to its plan and execution, which has ever been published. M. Salfi, in his *Éloge de Filangieri*, prefixed to a French translation of the *Scienza della Legislazione*, printed at Paris in 1822, states the following particulars.

"Le célèbre Franklin, reconnoissant en Filangieri un homme capable de faire de son pays ce qu'il avoit fait, lui, des États-Unis, lui envoya, ainsi qu'au roi des Deux-Siciles, un exemplaire de la constitution de cette naissante république. Il s'empressa même de répandre la *Science de la Législation* parmi ses nouveaux concitoyens, qui reconnurent et apprécièrent bientôt dans son auteur un de leurs frères. On peut regarder comme un témoignage de reconnoissance donné à ces modernes républicains, ce que firent en même temps quelques philanthropes du royaume de Naples. Ils décorèrent du nom de *Philadelphie* une ville de Calabre, qu'on vit renaître de ses ruines après le tremblement de terre de 1783. Je relève cette circonstance particulière pour que le voyageur éclairé ne voie pas, dans ce monument, l'ouvrage de la bizarrerie ou du hasard; il doit y admirer un indice incontestable des progrès que l'esprit de Filangieri commençoit à faire au milieu des Calabrois."

the interests of that nation, and that your advanced age may not prevent you from strengthening, and perfecting, and placing upon an eternal foundation by wise laws, the work achieved by a just indignation and by valor. I have the honor to subscribe myself in sincerity, Sir, your most devoted and obedient servant,

GAETANO FILANGIERI.

TO DAVID HARTLEY.

State of America.

Philadelphia, 27 October, 1785.

DEAR SIR,

I received at Havre de Grace six copies of your print, which I have brought with me hither. I shall frame and keep one of them in my best room. I shall send one to Mr. Jay, and give the others among some friends who esteem and respect you as we do.

Your newspapers are filled with accounts of distresses and miseries, that these States are plunged into since their separation from Britain. You may believe me when I tell you, that there is no truth in those accounts. I find all property in lands and houses augmented vastly in value; that of houses in towns at least fourfold. The crops have been plentiful, and yet the produce sells high, to the great profit of the farmer. At the same time, all imported goods sell at low rates, some cheaper than the first cost. Working people have plenty of employ and high pay for their labor.

These appear to me as certain signs of public prosperity. Some traders, indeed, complain that trade is dead; but this pretended evil is not an effect of inability in the people to buy, pay for, and consume the

usual articles of commerce, as far as they have occasion for them; it is owing merely to there being too many traders, who have crowded hither from all parts of Europe with more goods than the natural demand of the country requires. And what in Europe is called the debt of America, is chiefly the debt to these adventurers and supercargoes to their principals, with which the settled inhabitants of America, who never paid better for what they want and buy, have nothing to do. As to the contentment of the inhabitants with the change of government, methinks a stronger proof cannot be desired, than what they have given in my reception. You know the part I had in that change, and you see in the papers the addresses from all ranks with which your friend was welcomed home, and the sentiments they contain confirmed yesterday in the choice of him for President by the Council and new Assembly, which was unanimous, a single voice in seventy-seven excepted.

I remember you used to wish for newspapers from America. Herewith I send a few, and you shall be regularly supplied, if you can put me in a way of sending them, so as that you may not be obliged to pay postage. With unchangeable esteem and respect I am, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO MRS. MARY HEWSON.

Philadelphia, 30 October, 1785.

I received my dear friend's letter of July 23d, at Southampton, where I arrived the 24th, and stayed till the 28th. I believe I acquainted you by a line, immediately after my arrival here, that we had a pleasant, and not a long passage, in which there was but

one day, a day of violent storm, in which I was glad you were not with us. I had the happiness of finding my family well, and of being very kindly received by my country folks.

I say nothing to persuade your coming, because I said in a former letter, I would leave you entirely to your own judgment, which is very good. I would only mention the fact, that, on inquiry I am informed the usual apprentice-fee to a mercantile house of eminence, is from one hundred to one hundred and fifty pounds sterling. I am plunged again into public business, as deep as ever; and can now only add my love to the dear children, in which this family all join. Temple is just gone to look at his lands, and Ben is at college to complete his studies. I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. Franklin.

FROM RICHARD PRICE TO B. FRANKLIN.

Newington Green, 5 November, 1785.

Dear Friend,

I heard a few days ago with particular pleasure of your safe arrival at Philadelphia, and of the joy with which you were received there. We had been alarmed here by accounts in the public papers of your being taken by an Algerine pirate, and carried into slavery. I was so foolish as to believe this account, when I first read it; but a little inquiry and consideration soon convinced me, that the distress it gave me was groundless. May you still live to be happy in the respect and gratitude of your country, and to bless it by your counsel. It was a mortification to me, that I could not make one of the friends, who had the pleasure of being with you at Southampton.

I return you many thanks for the kind lines you sent me from thence. They gave me great pleasure.

I received some time ago from Mr. Vaughan a diploma, constituting me a member of the Philosophical Society at Philadelphia. Will you be so good as to convey to the President and other members of the Society, in whatever manner you may think proper, my very grateful acknowledgments? I cannot but be impressed by the honors they have done me, and I hope they will accept my wishes of their increasing credit and prosperity, to which, were it in my power, I should be glad to contribute.

I am sorry for the hostile aspect of affairs between this country and yours. The general cry during the war was, that the colonies were too important to be given up, and that our essential interests depended on keeping them. It seems now to be discovered among us, that they are of no use to us; and the issue may be, that we shall lose the trade and friendship of an increasing world, and throw it into the scale of France. Our restraints, however, will do good to the United States, should their effect be to oblige them to strengthen their federal government, to check their rage for trade, and to render them more independent, by causing them to find all they want within themselves.

Should you happen to see Mr. Vaughan, or any of his family, deliver my kind compliments to them. With every respectful sentiment, and the most affectionate regard, I am ever yours,

RICHARD PRICE.

TO JOHN BARD AND MRS. BARD.

Philadelphia, 14 November, 1785.

DEAR FRIENDS,

I received your kind letter, which gave me great pleasure, as it informed me of your welfare. Your friendly congratulations are very obliging. I had on my return some right, as you observe, to expect repose; and it was my intention to avoid all public business. But I had not firmness enough to resist the unanimous desire of my country folks; and I find myself harnessed again in their service for another year. They engrossed the prime of my life. They have eaten my flesh, and seem resolved now to pick my bones. You are right in supposing, that I interest myself in every thing that affects you and yours, sympathizing in your afflictions, and rejoicing in your felicities; for our friendship is ancient, and was never obscured by the least cloud.

I thank you for your civilities to my grandson, and am ever, with sincere and great esteem and regard, my dear friends, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO MATHON DE LA COUR.

Philadelphia, 18 November, 1785.

SIR,

I received duly the letter you did me the honor of writing to me on the 25th of June past, together with the collection you have made *des comptes rendus de vos contrôleurs généraux;* and your *Discours sur les Moyens d'encourager le Patriotisme dans les Monarchies.* The first is a valuable work, as containing a great deal of useful information; but the second I am particular-

ly charmed with, the sentiments being delightfully just, and expressed with such force and clearness, that I am persuaded the pamphlet, though small, must have a great effect on the minds of both princes and people, and thence be productive of much good to mankind. Be pleased to accept my hearty thanks for both.

It is right to be sowing good seed whenever we have an opportunity, since some of it may be productive. An instance of this you should be acquainted with, as it may afford you pleasure. The reading of *Fortuné Ricard's Testament*, has put it into the head and heart of a citizen to leave two thousand pounds sterling to two American cities, who are to lend it in small sums at five per cent to young beginners in business; and the accumulation, after a hundred years, to be laid out in public works of benefit to those cities.* With great esteem, I have the honor to be, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO EDWARD BANCROFT.

Proposed new Edition of Dr. Franklin's Writings.

Philadelphia, 26 November, 1785.

DEAR SIR,

I received your kind letter of September 5th, informing me of the intention Mr. Dilly has of printing a new edition of my writings, and of his desire, that I would furnish him with such additions as I may think proper. At present all my papers and manuscripts are so mixed with other things, by the confusions occasioned in sudden and various removals during the late troubles, that I can hardly find any thing. But, having nearly finished an addition to my house, which will af-

* See Dr. Franklin's Will.

ford me room to put all in order, I hope soon to be able to comply with such a request; but I hope Mr. Dilly will have a good understanding in the affair with Henry and Johnson, who, having risked the former impressions, may suppose they thereby acquired some right in the copy. As to the *Life* proposed to be written, if it be by the same hand who furnished a sketch to Dr. Lettsom, which he sent me, I am afraid it will be found too full of errors for either you or me to correct; and, having been persuaded by my friends, Messrs. Vaughan and M. Le Veillard, Mr. James of this place, and some others, that such a *Life*, written by myself, may be useful to the rising generation, I have made some progress in it, and hope to finish it this winter; so I cannot but wish that project of Mr. Dilly's biographer may be laid aside. I am nevertheless thankful to you for your friendly offer of correcting it.

As to public affairs, it is long since I gave over all expectations of a commercial treaty between us and Britain; and I think we can do as well, or better, without one than she can. Our harvests are plenty, our produce fetches a high price in hard money, and there are in every part of our country incontestable marks of public felicity. We discover, indeed, some errors in our general and particular constitutions; which it is no wonder they should have, the time in which they were formed being considered. But these we shall soon mend. The little disorders you have heard of in some of the States, raised by a few wrong heads, are subsiding, and will probably soon be extinguished. My best wishes, and those of my family, attend you. We shall be happy to see you here, when it suits you to visit us; being with sincere and great esteem, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM JONATHAN SHIPLEY, BISHOP OF ST. ASAPH, TO B. FRANKLIN.

Twyford, 27 November, 1785.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I felt myself much obliged to your worthy nephew, Mr. Williams, for the account of your safe arrival, and very honorable reception at Philadelphia. Our last short interview at Southampton was so much in mixed company, and your hours were so entirely taken up with the final business of leaving this ungrateful country, that I hardly found a single opportunity for the confidential information, to which our old friendship seemed to entitle us, and I on my part was very ready to give.

But, to own the truth, I had but little curiosity to know the particulars of your negotiations with either the French or the English ministers. The event has shown, that, in their own arts, you were not inferior to the ablest of them. I had much rather hear from you, with what prudence and success your countrymen proceed in reviving and establishing that civil liberty, which is extinguished everywhere else. Sure there never was opened so fine a field for making experiments and improvements in the philosophy of government, which I take to be the noblest species of philosophy that can exercise the mind of man. But your great blessing is, that he, who is best able to serve his country, is sure of being rewarded. Make the most of the golden opportunity. It has seldom lasted long. I live in a very different scene, where the most unprofitable and perhaps the most dangerous part a man can act, is, to mention the faults or propose any amendment in our corrupt and shattered frame of government. Yet I feel every day more reason to be pleased with the part I myself have acted.

But whether you had rather give us only an account of your domestic circumstances, which I think must necessarily be happy, I fancy you will give me credit for saying, that nobody will be more warmly interested in what concerns you, than the part of my family you saw at Southampton. Mrs. Shipley and her daughter Kitty, in their passion for you, rival Georgiana. They agree with me in interesting ourselves for all the worthy family party we met with you. I wish your nephew, and my old friend, Mr. Williams, success in all his future views. He can hardly undertake any business for which he is unqualified. Your promising grandson, who has the courage to tread in your early steps, I hope, will preserve the same generous emulation through his life. Few professions are in my eyes more respectable, than the character of a printer, who excels in his art. Aldus and Stephens stand high as men of letters, and made their learning and criticism subservient to their business.

Let me hope, that you will sometimes remember, amidst the applauses of your countrymen, that there is a family in England, who love you as well as your own. Your ever affectionate

J. St. Asaph.

TO JAMES BOWDOIN.

Dr. Jeffries's Aërial Voyage from England to France.

Philadelphia, 1 January, 1786.

My dear Friend,

It gave me great pleasure to receive your kind letter of congratulation, as it proved, that all my old friends in Boston were not estranged from me by the malevolent misrepresentations of my conduct, that had

been circulated there, but that one of the most esteemed still retained a regard for me. Indeed, you are now almost the only one left me by nature; death having, since we were last together, deprived me of my dear Cooper, Winthrop, and Quincy.

I have not received the letter you mention to have sent me with some Memoirs, under cover to Dr. Price. I must have left Europe before they got to his hands; but he will doubtless send them to me by the first convenient opportunity. It was not necessary to make any apology for the liberty you say you have taken in those Memoirs, in making observations on my *Queries* upon light, for I am sure they will help me to understand it better, and that must make them agreeable to me. I shall be glad to see the whole volume,* which you are so kind as to promise me; and I hope in the course of a few months to be able to make returns, in a second volume of our Memoirs,† now in the press.

I sent to you by Mr. Gerry, some weeks since, Dr. Jeffries's account of his aërial voyage from England to France, which I received from him just before I left that country. In his letter, that came with it, he requests I would not suffer it to be printed, because a copy of it had been put into the hands of Sir Joseph Banks for the Royal Society, and was to be read there in November. If they should not think fit to publish it, as I apprehend may be the case, they having hitherto avoided meddling with the subject of balloons, I shall be glad to have the minutes returned to me. In the mean time, I thought it might afford some

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* First volume of the Memoirs of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

† Transactions of the American Philosophical Society.

amusement to you and to your Society.* My acquaintance with Dr. Jeffries began by his bringing me a letter in France, the first through the air, from England.

With best wishes of many happy new years to you, and good Madam Bowdoin, I have the honor to be, dear Sir, &c. B. FRANKLIN.†

FROM THE DUKE DE LA ROCHEFOUCAULD TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

Paris, 8 February, 1786.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have heard of you through Mr. Jefferson and M. le Veillard. The latter showed me the letter, in which you announced to him your nomination to the office of President, and I admired the resolution which determined you to take upon yourself an employment so fatiguing, but in which you can labor effectually for the happiness of Pennsylvania, and for that of the other

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* The paper was printed in London, entitled, "A Narrative of two Aërial Voyages," 4to. 1786.

† Extract from a letter to his sister.

"*Philadelphia*, 24 *January*, 1786. Your letter to Mr. V. seems to me very proper and well written, and I think he was wrong in detaining the five dollars. But when we consider that he was under no legal obligation to pay a debt contracted by his son, we may be glad, that we have received so much of it, and that, when it is common to pay the interest of an old debt in ill language, he has paid you only in silence. It is a family I have formerly been in friendship with, and I would not have you trouble them with any further demands.

"I do not wonder at your blaming me for accepting the government [the office of President of Pennsylvania]. We have all of us wisdom enough to judge what others ought to do, or not to do, in the management of their affairs; and it is possible I might blame you as much if you were to accept the offer of a young husband. My example may teach you not to be too confident in your own prudence, as it teaches me not to be surprised at such an event, should it really happen."

States, upon which the example of your own will assuredly have a great influence. I know that two powerful and nearly equal parties support different principles as the basis of the Constitution; but nobody is better qualified than yourself to conciliate both of them, and to obtain, not perhaps the constitution most absolutely perfect, but at least, as Solon said, the best which your fellow citizens are able to bear.

This is the critical moment for the Americans. The return of peace and the certainty of independence demand of them a general revision of their laws, and the formation of new codes, no longer a servile imitation of the laws of England, but dictated by reason, conformed to their actual situation, and adapted to insure the happiness of States and individuals. In legislation you must be the teachers of the world, which is expecting from you some important lessons.

I will not trespass upon the time of so busy a man as yourself, and will therefore close by offering you the compliments of all my family, to which M. de Condorcet requests me to add his. That your life and health may be prolonged is the unanimous prayer of all those, who have ever heard of you. All, who have had the satisfaction of knowing you, add the hope, that they may retain a place in your friendship. I venture to believe, that I deserve this, by the sincere attachment and veneration which I feel for you.

Duke de la Rochefoucauld.

FROM THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE TO B. FRANKLIN.

Tour in Germany. — Prussia. — Austria. — Indian Vocabularies for the Empress of Russia.

Paris, 10 February, 1786.

My dear Friend,

With unspeakable satisfaction I have heard of your safe arrival in America, and heartily wished I had been mingled in the happy crowd of your fellow citizens, when they saw you set your foot on the shore of Liberty. When your friends in Paris meet together, their first talk is of you. The wishes for you of a fortunate voyage, and pleasing sight of your family and friends, became a national sentiment. In my tour through Germany, I have been asked a thousand questions about you, when I felt equally proud and happy to boast of our affectionate intimacy.

Prussia and the Austrian dominions, with some parts of the German empire, the liberties of which have been so much spoken of in treaties and so little felt by the people, have been the object of my very agreeable journey.* The first class of people are, I found, misinformed, with respect to American affairs. What may be wrong, they know perfectly, with an addition of a thousand falsehoods; and I wish no ground was left for our enemies to found those falsehoods upon. Although they have an enthusiastic admiration of the virtues displayed by America during the war, yet it is a matter of doubt with them, (some sensible and feeling men excepted, particularly Prince Henry,) if free con-

* Lafayette had recently returned from a tour through Germany. An account of this tour is contained in the *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. X. p. 53.

stitutions can support themselves. The King of Prussia himself is blinded by habit and prejudices.

That monarch's temper is very bad; the Emperor's not very quiet. But, the affairs of Great Britain being embarrassed, and our politics very pacific, I do not think any storm is to be feared. I have been happy to hear you have accepted the presidency of Pennsylvania. Nothing but that could speedily restore internal union, and remove the jealousies against neighbours. You will encourage federal measures, regulations for trade, a general system of militia; and, the more I learn the opinions of foreign nations, the more I wish for such arrangements, the necessity of which is obvious to almost every American. A committee, consisting of the intendants of finance, counsellors of state, and farmers-general, has been appointed to consider the affairs of American commerce. I shall attend regularly, but, as it is just begun, I cannot tell whether it will be very useful.

Enclosed I send you a vocabulary, which the Empress of Russia requests may be filled up with Indian words. You know her plan of a Universal Dictionary. I have thought you might send me the Delaware and Shawanese languages, with some others. Your commissioners for Indian affairs, Colonel Harmar and General Butler, will be able to superintend the business, which it is important to have well done, as the Empress, although I think to very little purpose, sets a great value upon it.*

Be so kind as to remember me most affectionately to your family, daughter, grandsons, son-in-law, and to all our friends in Philadelphia. My heart has been

* For other particulars respecting these Indian vocabularies, see *Washington's Writings*, Vol. IX. pp. 195, 301, 306.

long opened to you, and I need not assure you, that, with the highest regard and tenderest affection, I have the honor to be, &c.

LAFAYETTE.

TO JONATHAN SHIPLEY.

Progress of the Government in the United States — Domestic Circumstances.

Philadelphia, 24 February, 1786.

DEAR FRIEND,

I received lately your kind letter of November 27th. My reception here was, as you have heard, very honorable indeed; but I was betrayed by it, and by some remains of ambition, from which I had imagined myself free, to accept of the chair of government for the State of Pennsylvania, when the proper thing for me was repose and a private life. I hope, however, to be able to bear the fatigue for one year, and then to retire.

I have much regretted our having so little opportunity for conversation when we last met.* You could have given me informations and counsels that I wanted, but we were scarce a minute together without being broken in upon. I am to thank you, however, for the pleasure I had after our parting, in reading the new book† you gave me, which I think generally well written and likely to do good; though the reading time of most people is of late so taken up with newspapers and little periodical pamphlets, that few now-a-days venture to attempt reading a quarto volume. I have admired to see, that, in the last century, a folio, *Burton*

* At Southampton, previous to Dr. Franklin's embarking for the United States. — W. T. F.

† Paley's *Moral Philosophy.* — W. T. F.

on Melancholy, went through six editions in about forty years. We have, I believe, more readers now, but not of such large books.

You seem desirous of knowing what progress we make here in improving our governments. We are, I think, in the right road of improvement, for we are making experiments. I do not oppose all that seem wrong, for the multitude are more effectually set right by experience, than kept from going wrong by reasoning with them. And I think we are daily more and more enlightened; so that I have no doubt of our obtaining in a few years as much public felicity, as good government is capable of affording.

Your newspapers are filled with fictitious accounts of anarchy, confusion, distresses, and miseries we are supposed to be involved in, as consequences of the revolution; and the few remaining friends of the old government among us take pains to magnify every little inconvenience a change in the course of commerce may have occasioned. To obviate the complaints they endeavour to excite, was written the enclosed little piece,* from which you may form a truer idea of our situation, than your own public prints would give you. And I can assure you, that the great body of our nation find themselves happy in the change, and have not the smallest inclination to return to the domination of Britain. There could not be a stronger proof of the general approbation of the measures, that promoted the change, and of the change itself, than has been given by the Assembly and Council of this State, in the nearly unanimous choice for their governor, of one who had been so much concerned in those measures; the Assembly being themselves the unbribed choice of

* Probably the piece entitled, *The Retort Courteous*. See Vol. II p. 498.

the people, and therefore may be truly supposed of the same sentiments. I say nearly unanimous, because, of between seventy and eighty votes, there were only my own and one other in the negative.

As to my domestic circumstances, of which you kindly desire to hear something, they are at present as happy as I could wish them. I am surrounded by my offspring, a dutiful and affectionate daughter in my house, with six grandchildren, the eldest of whom you have seen, who is now at College in the next street, finishing the learned part of his education; the others promising, both for parts and good dispositions. What their conduct may be, when they grow up and enter the important scenes of life, I shall not live to *see*, and I cannot *foresee*. I therefore enjoy among them the present hour, and leave the future to Providence.

He that raises a large family does, indeed, while he lives to observe them, *stand*, as Watts says, *a broader mark for sorrow;* but then he stands a broader mark for pleasure too. When we launch our little fleet of barks into the ocean, bound to different ports, we hope for each a prosperous voyage; but contrary winds, hidden shoals, storms, and enemies come in for a share in the disposition of events; and though these occasion a mixture of disappointment, yet, considering the risk where we can make no insurance, we should think ourselves happy if some return with success. My son's son, Temple Franklin, whom you have also seen, having had a fine farm of six hundred acres conveyed to him by his father when we were at Southampton, has dropped for the present his views of acting in the political line, and applies himself ardently to the study and practice of agriculture. This is much more agreeable to me, who esteem it the most useful, the most independent, and therefore the noblest

of employments. His lands are on navigable water, communicating with the Delaware, and but about sixteen miles from this city. He has associated to himself a very skilful English farmer lately arrived here, who is to instruct him in the business, and partakes for a term the profits; so that there is a great apparent probability of their success.

You will kindly expect a word or two concerning myself. My health and spirits continue, thanks to God, as when you saw me. The only complaint I then had, does not grow worse, and is tolerable. I still have enjoyment in the company of my friends; and, being easy in my circumstances, have many reasons to like living. But the course of nature must soon put a period to my present mode of existence. This I shall submit to with the less regret, as, having seen during a long life a good deal of this world, I feel a growing curiosity to be acquainted with some other; and can cheerfully, with filial confidence, resign my spirit to the conduct of that great and good Parent of mankind, who created it, and who has so graciously protected and prospered me from my birth to the present hour. Wherever I am, I hope always to retain the pleasing remembrance of your friendship, being with sincere and great esteem, my dear friend, yours most affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. We all join in respects to Mrs. Shipley, and best wishes for the whole amiable family.

TO M. LE VEILLARD, OF PASSY.

Flourishing State of America. — Cardinal de Rohan.

Philadelphia, 6 March, 1786.

My dear Friend,

I received and read with great pleasure your kind letter of October 9th. It informed me of your welfare, and that of the best of good women, and of her amiable daughter, who I think will tread in her steps. My effects came all in the same ship, in good order; and we are now drinking every day *les eaux épurées de Passy* with great satisfaction, as they kept well, and seem to be rendered more agreeable by the long voyage.

I am here in the bosom of my family, and am not only happy myself, but have the felicity of seeing my country so. Be assured, that all the stories spread in the English papers of our distresses, and confusions, and discontents with our new governments, are as chimerical as the history of my being in chains at Algiers. They exist only in the wishes of our enemies. America never was in higher prosperity, her produce abundant and bearing a good price, her working people all employed and well paid, and all property in lands and houses of more than treble the value it bore before the war; and, our commerce being no longer the monopoly of British merchants, we are furnished with all the foreign commodities we need, at much more reasonable rates than heretofore. So that we have no doubt of being able to discharge more speedily the debt incurred by the war, than at first was apprehended.

Our modes of collecting taxes are indeed as yet imperfect, and we have need of more skill in finan-

ciering; but we improve in that kind of knowledge daily by experience. That our people are contented with the revolution, with their new constitutions, and their foreign connexions, nothing can afford a stronger proof, than the universally cordial and joyous reception with which they welcomed the return of one, that was supposed to have had a considerable share in promoting them. All this is in answer to that part of your letter, in which you seem to have been too much impressed with some of the ideas, which those lying English papers endeavour to inculcate concerning us.

I am astonished by what you write concerning the *Prince Evêque.* If the charges against him are made good, it will be another instance of the truth of those proverbs which teach us, that *Prodigality begets necessity,* that *Without economy no revenue is sufficient,* and that *It is hard for an empty sack to stand upright.*

I am glad to hear of the marriage of Mademoiselle Brillon; for every thing, that may contribute to the happiness of that beloved family, gives me pleasure. Be pleased to offer them my felicitations, and assure them of my best wishes.

Will you also be so good as to present my respectful compliments to Madame la Duchesse d'Enville, and to M. le Duc de la Rochefoucauld? You may communicate the political part of this letter to that excellent man. His good heart will rejoice to hear of the welfare of America.

I made no progress when at sea in the history you mention;* but I was not idle there, having written three pieces, each of some length; one on Nautical matters; another on Chimneys; and a third a Description of my Vase for consuming smoke, with directions

* Memoirs of his own life.

for using it.* These are all now printing in the Transactions of our Philosophical Society, of which I hope soon to send you a copy.

My grandsons present their compliments. The eldest is very busy in preparing for a country life, being to enter upon his farm the 25th instant. It consists of about six hundred acres, bounding on navigable water, sixteen miles from Philadelphia. The youngest is at College, very diligent in his studies. You know my situation, involved in public cares; but they cannot make me forget, that you and I love one another, and that I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO BENJAMIN RUSH.

Philadelphia, March, 1786.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

During our long acquaintance, you have shown many instances of your regard for me; yet I must now desire you to add one more to the number, which is, that, if you publish your ingenious discourse on the *Moral Sense*, you will totally omit and suppress that most extravagant encomium on your friend Franklin, which hurt me exceedingly in the unexpected hearing, and will mortify me beyond conception, if it should appear from the press. Confiding in your compliance with this earnest request, I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.†

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* See Vol. VI. pp. 463, 505, 543.

† Dr. Rush replied to this letter as follows. "Agreeably to your request, I have suppressed the conclusion of my oration, but I cannot bear to think of sending it out of our State or to Europe without connecting it with your name. I have therefore taken the liberty of inscribing it to you by a simple dedication, of which the enclosed is a copy. And

TO MRS. MARY HEWSON.

Humorous Account of a Letter received from her. — His Occupations and Amusements.

Philadelphia, 6 May, 1786.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

A long winter has past, and I have not had the pleasure of a line from you, acquainting me with your and your children's welfare, since I left England. I suppose you have been in Yorkshire, out of the way and knowledge of opportunities; for I will not think that you have forgotten me.

To make me some amends, I received a few days past a large packet from Mr. Williams, dated September, 1776, near ten years since, containing three letters from you, one of December 12th, 1775. This packet had been received by Mr. Bache, after my departure for France, lay dormant among his papers during all my absence, and has just now broke out upon me, *like words*, that had been, as somebody says, *congealed in northern air.* Therein I find all the pleasing little family history of your children; how William had begun to spell, overcoming, by strength of memory, all the difficulty occasioned by the common wretched alphabet, while you were convinced of the utility of our new one; how Tom, genius-like, struck out new paths, and, relinquishing the old names of

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as you have never in the course of our long acquaintance refused *me* a single favor, I must earnestly insist upon your adding to my great and numerous obligations to you the permission, which I now solicit, to send my *last* as I did my *first* publication into the world under the patronage of your name." — *March 11th*, 1786.

The discourse here alluded to, *On the Influence of Physical Causes on the Moral Faculty*, was delivered before the American Philosophical Society, February 27th, 1786, and published soon afterwards.

the letters, called U *bell*, and P *bottle;* how Eliza began to grow jolly, that is, fat and handsome, resembling aunt Rooke, whom I used to call *my lovely.* Together with all the *then* news of lady Blount's having produced at length a boy; of Dolly's being well, and of poor good Catherine's decease; of your affairs with Muir and Atkinson, and of their contract for feeding the fish in the channel; of the Vinys and their jaunt to Cambridge in the long carriage; of Dolly's journey to Wales with Mrs. Scott; of the Wilkeses, the Pearces, Elphinstones, &c.; — concluding with a kind of promise, that, as soon as the ministry and Congress agreed to make peace, I should have you with me in America. That peace has been some time made; but, alas! the promise is not yet fulfilled.

I have found my family here in health, good circumstances, and well respected by their fellow citizens. The companions of my youth are indeed almost all departed, but I find an agreeable society among their children and grandchildren. I have public business enough to preserve me from *ennui*, and private amusement besides in conversation, books, my garden, and *cribbage.* Considering our well-furnished, plentiful market as the best of gardens, I am turning mine, in the midst of which my house stands, into grass plots and gravel walks, with trees and flowering shrubs. Cards we sometimes play here, in long winter evenings; but it is as they play at chess, not for money, but for honor, or the pleasure of beating one another. This will not be quite a novelty to you, as you may remember we played together in that manner during the winter at Passy. I have indeed now and then a little compunction in reflecting that I spend time so idly; but another reflection comes to relieve me, whispering, "*You know that the soul is immortal; why then*

should you be such a niggard of a little time, when you have a whole eternity before you?" So, being easily convinced, and, like other reasonable creatures, satisfied with a small reason, when it is in favor of doing what I have a mind to, I shuffle the cards again, and begin another game.

As to public amusements, we have neither plays nor operas, but we had yesterday a kind of oratorio, as you will see by the enclosed paper; and we have assemblies, balls, and concerts, besides little parties at one another's houses, in which there is sometimes dancing, and frequently good music; so that we jog on in life as pleasantly as you do in England; anywhere but in London, for there you have plays performed by good actors. That, however, is, I think, the only advantage London has over Philadelphia.

Temple has turned his thoughts to agriculture, which he pursues ardently, being in possession of a fine farm, that his father lately conveyed to him. Ben is finishing his studies at college, and continues to behave as well as when you knew him, so that I think he will make you a good son. His younger brothers and sisters are also promising, appearing to have good tempers and dispositions, as well as good constitutions. As to myself, I think my general health and spirits rather better than when you saw me. The particular malady I then complained of continues tolerable. With sincere and very great esteem, I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. My children and grandchildren join with me in best wishes for you and yours. My love to my godson, to Eliza, and to honest Tom. They will all find agreeable companions here. Love to Dolly, and tell her she will do well to come with you.

TO MRS. MARY HEWSON.

Philadelphia, 30 May, 1786.

DEAR POLLY,

I have just received your kind letter of April 2d, which made me some amends for your long silence. By the last ship from hence I wrote to you acknowledging the receipt of some very old letters, when I was sorry I could mention none of later date. I have, however, no right to complain, being so bad a correspondent myself. But my last was a long one, and I hope you have received it.

You seem now inclined to come over, if you could meet with a captain, that you know and like. We mentioned it to Captain Falconer. He goes no more to sea, but strongly recommends Captain Willet, who carries this letter, as a good man and excellent seaman. His ship is the *Harmony*, which lately brought over Mr. and Mrs. Bingham. Mr. Williams will hardly, I doubt, be with you in time this year to assist in your embarkation; but, if you apply to Messrs. Johnson and Company, American merchants, to whom I write, I am persuaded they will make the bargain for you, and assist you with their advice in every circumstance.

Temple, who presents his respects, has, however, no hopes of your coming. He says you were so long irresolute and wavering about the journey to Paris, that he thinks it unlikely you will decide firmly to make the voyage to America.

I enclose a truer state of affairs in our country, than your public prints will afford you, and I pray "God guide you."

This family are all well, and join in love to you and yours with your affectionate

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. Captain Willet is to leave London on his return about the 1st of August. Your *son* Ben, and all this family, join in the hope of your resolving to come over.*

FROM WILLIAM COCKE TO B. FRANKLIN.

Concerning a new State called Franklin.

State of Franklin, 15 June, 1786.

SIR,

I make no doubt but you have heard, that the good people of this country have declared themselves a separate State from North Carolina; and that, as a testimony of the high esteem they have for the many important and faithful services you have rendered to your country, they have called the name of their State after you. I presume you have also heard the reasons, on which our separation is founded, some of which are as follows; that North Carolina had granted us a separation on certain well-known conditions, expressed in an act of the General Assembly of that State, which conditions, we think, she had no right to break through without our consent, as well as the consent of Congress. We therefore determine strictly to adhere to the conditions expressed in said act, and doubt not but Congress will be uniform in their just demands, as well as honorable in complying with their resolve to confirm all the just claims of such persons, as have purchased land under the laws of North Carolina, for which they have paid that State.

The confidence we have in the wisdom and justice of the United States inclines us to leave every matter of

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* Mrs. Hewson soon afterwards came over with her family to America, and established herself at Philadelphia. See Vol. VII. p. 151.

dispute to their decision, and I am expressly empowered and commanded to give the United States full assurance, that we shall act in obedience to their determination, provided North Carolina will consent that they shall become the arbiters. I had set out with the intention to wait on Congress to discharge the duties of the trust reposed in me, but I am informed, that Congress will adjourn about the last of this month; and I will thank you to be so kind as to favor me with a few lines by the bearer, Mr. Rogers, to inform me when Congress will meet again, and shall be happy to have your sentiments and advice on so important a subject. I have the honor to be, &c.

WILLIAM COCKE.

TO NOAH WEBSTER.

On a Reformed Alphabet.

Philadelphia, 18 June, 1786.

SIR,

I received the letter you did me the honor of writing to me the 24th past, with the scheme enclosed of your reformed alphabet. I think the reformation not only necessary, but practicable; but have so much to say to you on the subject, that I wish to see and confer with you upon it, as that would save much time in writing; sounds, till such an alphabet is fixed, not being easily explained or discoursed of clearly upon paper.

I have formerly considered this matter pretty fully, and contrived some of the means of carrying it into execution, so as gradually to render the reformation general. Our ideas are so nearly similar, that I make no doubt of our easily agreeing on the plan; and you may depend on the best support I may be able to give it, as a

part of your *Institute*,* of which I wish you would bring with you a complete copy, having as yet seen only a part of it. I shall then be better able to recommend it as you desire. Hoping to have soon the pleasure of seeing you, I do not enlarge, but am with sincere esteem, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM THE MARQUIS DE CHASTELLUX TO B. FRANKLIN.

Chastellux's Travels in America. — His Translation of Humphreys's Poem.

Translation.

Paris, 21 June, 1786.

MY DEAR SIR,

I owe to you, on every account, the homage which I now take the liberty of offering. It was by your agency, that the Revolution of North America was mainly prepared and effected; it was your hand, acting secretly like the hand of Providence, which led me to that new continent; and, when there, I felt proud and happy to labor *pro viribus meis* in the great work, which you have contributed so much to bring to a glorious consummation. No American, I venture to affirm, could be more sincerely attached to this cause than I have been. I could not, therefore, see your country in any but a favorable light; and, if my love of truth occasionally called forth a gentle censure, my best wishes always took the place of my admiration, when the latter was compelled to be silent. Moreover, I have had the good fortune to succeed, precisely where success was most flattering. None of my

* Grammatical Institute of the English Language, published in 1784

readers have reached the end of my work, without a deep feeling of love and respect for your fellow citizens, and no one has ever refused me the praise of being animated by the same sentiments.*

When you were in France, there was no need of praising the Americans. We had only to say, *Look, here is their representative.* But, however worthily your place may have since been filled, it is not unseasonable to arouse anew the interest of a kind-hearted but thoughtless nation, and to fix, from time to time, its attention upon the great event, to which it has had the happiness of contributing. Such has been my motive, in translating Colonel Humphreys's poem.† My success has fully equalled, and even surpassed, my expectation. Not only has the public received the work with favor, but it has succeeded perfectly at court, especially with the King and Queen, who have praised it highly.

I take the liberty of offering to you this translation, although it can have but little value to those, who have seen the original. But you are perfectly acquainted with our language, and, knowing better than any one else both the difficulty of translating into French verse, and of giving to prose sufficient sprightliness and brilliancy to express poetic ideas, you will be able to defend me before those, who may blame the freedom I have allowed myself; for I have taken more pains to render my work an agreeable one to read, than to make it an exact and faithful translation. Be this as it may, my intention will be my best excuse, and my

* This letter was accompanied with a copy of the Marquis de Chastellux's *Travels in America*, which had recently been published.

† A Poem addressed to the Armies of the United States, which was translated into French by the Marquis de Chastellux. See Humphreys's *Miscellaneous Works*, pp. 9 – 15.

attachment to you my best title to your indulgence. It is not my talents, that I wish to display before you, but the sentiments of respect and devotion with which I have the honor to be, &c.

THE MARQUIS DE CHASTELLUX.

P. S. Have the kindness to present my respects to Mr. and Mrs. Bache. I have no doubt, that the ladies of Philadelphia are as attentive to you as those of Paris; and I believe that I could find no one to recall me to their recollection in a more acceptable manner than yourself. Please to present my particular respects to Mrs. Morris, Mrs. Powel, Mrs. Meredith, Miss Cadwalader, and Mrs. Craig.

TO MRS. JANE MECOM.

On Bad Spelling.

Philadelphia, 4 July, 1786.

—— You need not be concerned, in writing to me, about your bad spelling; for, in my opinion, as our alphabet now stands, the bad spelling, or what is called so, is generally the best, as conforming to the sound of the letters and of the words. To give you an instance. A gentleman received a letter, in which were these words, — *Not finding Brown at hom, I delivered your meseg to his yf.* The gentleman finding it bad spelling, and therefore not very intelligible called his lady to help him read it. Between them they picked out the meaning of all but the *yf*, which they could not understand. The lady proposed calling her chambermaid, because Betty, says she, has the best knack at reading bad spelling of any one I know. Betty came, and was surprised, that neither

Sir nor Madam could tell what *yf* was. "Why," says she, "*y f* spells *wife;* what else can it spell?" And, indeed, it is a much better, as well as shorter method of spelling *wife*, than *doubleyou, i, ef, e*, which in reality spell *doubleyifey.*

There is much rejoicing in town to-day, it being the anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, which we signed this day ten years, and thereby hazarded lives and fortunes. God was pleased to put a favorable end to the contest much sooner than we had reason to expect. His name be praised. Adieu,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO MR. GRAND, BANKER IN PARIS.

Making Inquiry respecting a Million of Livres advanced by the French Government.

Philadelphia, 11 July, 1786.

SIR,

I send you enclosed some letters, that have passed between the Secretary of Congress and me, respecting three millions of livres, acknowledged to have been received, before the treaty of February, 1778, as *don gratuit* from the King, of which only two millions are found in your accounts; unless the million from the Farmers-General be one of the three. I have been assured, that all the money received from the King, whether as loan or gift, went through your hands; and as I always looked on the million we had of the Farmers-General to be distinct from what we had of the crown, I wonder how I came to sign the contract, acknowledging three millions of gift, when, in reality, there were only two, exclusive of that from the Farmers; and, as both you and I examined the project of the

contract before I signed it, I am surprised, that neither of us took notice of the error.

It is possible, that the million furnished ostensibly by the Farmers, was in fact a gift of the crown, in which case, as Mr. Thomson observes, they owe us for the two ship loads of tobacco, which they received on account of it. I most earnestly request of you to get this matter explained, that I may stand clear before I die, lest some enemy should afterwards accuse me of having received a million not accounted for. I am, &c.

B. Franklin

TO WILLIAM COCKE.

Name and Condition of the new State of Franklin.

Philadelphia, 12 August, 1786.

Sir,

I received yesterday the letter you did me the honor of writing me on the 15th of June past. I had never before been acquainted, that the name of your intended new State had any relation with my name, having understood that it was called *Frankland.* It is a very great honor indeed, that its inhabitants have done me, and I should be happy if it were in my power to show how sensible I am of it, by something more essential than my wishes for their prosperity.*

Having resided some years past in Europe, and being but lately arrived thence, I have not had an opportunity of being well informed of the points in dispute between you and the State of North Carolina. I can therefore only say, that I think you are perfectly right in resolving to submit them to the discretion of Con-

* The name of this new State was afterwards changed to *Tennessee.*

gress, and to abide by their determination. It is a wise and impartial tribunal, which can have no sinister views to warp its judgment. It is happy for us all, that we have now in our own country such a council to apply to, for composing our differences, without being obliged, as formerly, to carry them across the ocean to be decided, at an immense expense, by a council which knew little of our affairs, would hardly take any pains to understand them, and which often treated our applications with contempt, and rejected them with injurious language. Let us, therefore, cherish and respect our own tribunal; for the more generally it is held in high regard, the more able it will be to answer effectually the ends of its institution, the quieting of our contentions, and thereby promoting our common peace and happiness.

I do not hear any talk of an adjournment of Congress, concerning which you inquire; and I rather think it likely they may continue to sit out their year, as it is but lately they have been able to make a quorum for business, which must therefore probably be in arrear. If you proceed in your intended journey, I shall be glad to see you as you pass through Philadelphia. In the mean time I have the honor to be, very respectfully, Sir, your most obedient servant,

B. Franklin.

FROM JOHN COAKLEY LETTSOM TO B. FRANKLIN.

Memoirs of Dr. Fothergill. — Plan for Discoveries in Natural History. — Cultivation of Rhubarb.

London, 14 August, 1786.

Respected Friend,

Not having had the favor of a letter since thy arrival on thy native continent, I take the liberty of address-

ing a letter with the *Memoirs of Dr. Fothergill*, just printed. The manner in which I have introduced the memoirs of Dr. Cuming and Dr. Cleghorn will best explain the manner in which I wished to introduce thy respectable name among them. I am sensible how inadequate I am to give the true traits of a character, that has instructed and astonished both America and Europe; and it was not my view thus to enter upon the department of a historian, but rather, by a few anecdotes of early life, to lay the basis of a superstructure destined for an abler pen; and this I think might be done by correcting the dates and some little particulars of that rough sketch, which I formerly sent thee when at Paris; and this would content me, unless thou shouldest be disposed to make any addition.

I have, at different times, received from North America various specimens of ores, as well as of coal. The iron, in particular, has been very fine; and, if these various treasures were properly assayed, probably in time much national advantage might result. There are in your Provinces many ingenious persons, who, with very moderate encouragement, would visit your mountains and woods in pursuit of discovery. You possess many valuable dyes and articles of medicine yet unknown.

I have lately had a correspondence with Mr. Humphrey Marshall, of Bradford, in West Chester County, who is an excellent botanist, and has a pretty general knowledge of natural history, and for a little encouragement, would, I am informed, undertake a voyage of discovery into your woods and mountains. He mentioned to me, that such a journey might be undertaken, and continued for at least a year, at the expense of three hundred pounds. If a subscription for this purpose were effected, I would willingly subscribe my mite

of twenty guineas towards it, for the sake of a share of the seeds, plants, and ores that may be collected; I mean as specimens merely of your productions. I have now a man from Europe travelling through America for the purpose of collecting your productions, particularly of the vegetable kind.

Within the last ten years much rhubarb, of the Turkey kind, has been cultivated in Scotland and England. Its cultivation is becoming more and more general. I sent seeds over a year ago. I have now sent roots, as they vegetated with me in pots; and I hope it may become an object with you to cultivate this useful plant. It is also an ornamental plant in horticulture. I hope also by the same opportunity to transmit some tea plants, which your southern colonies are well calculated for. I am respectfully, &c.

J. C. Lettsom.

FROM M. DURIVAL TO MR. GRAND.*

Translation.

Versailles, 30 August, 1786.

Sir,

I have received the letter, which you did me the honor to write on the 28th of this month, touching the advance of a million, which you say was made by the Farmers-General to the United States of America, the 3d of June, 1777. I have no knowledge of that advance. What I have verified is, that the King, by the contract of the 25th of February, 1783, has confirmed the gratuitous gift, which his Majesty had previously made, of the three millions hereafter mentioned,

* In answer to a letter from Mr. Grand, respecting an inquiry of Dr. Franklin. See the letter to Mr. Grand, above, p. 265.

viz. one million delivered by the Royal Treasury, the 10th of June, 1776, and two other millions advanced also by the Royal Treasury, in 1777, on four receipts of the Deputies of Congress, of the 17th of January, 3d of April, 10th of June, and 15th of October, of the same year. This explanation will, Sir, I hope, resolve your doubt touching the advance of the 3d of June, 1777. I further recommend to you, Sir, to confer on this subject with M. Gojard, who ought to be better informed than we, who had no knowledge of any advances, but those made by the Royal Treasury. I have the honor to be, &c.

DURIVAL.

FROM M. DURIVAL TO MR. GRAND.

Translation.

Versailles, 5 September, 1786

SIR,

I laid before the Count de Vergennes the two letters which you did me the honor to write, touching the three millions, the free gift of which the King has confirmed in favor of the United States of America. The minister, Sir, observed, that this gift has nothing to do with the million, which the Congress may have received from the Farmers-General in 1777; consequently he thinks, that the receipt, which you desire may be communicated to you, cannot satisfy the object of your view, and that it would be useless to give you the copy which you desire. I have the honor to be, with perfect attachment, &c.

DURIVAL.

FROM MR. GRAND TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

Paris, 9 September, 1786.

My dear Sir,

The letter you honored me with, covered the copies of three letters, which Mr. Thomson wrote you in order to obtain an explanation of a million, which is not to be found in my accounts. I should have been very much embarrassed in satisfying and proving to him, that I had not put that million in my pocket, had I not applied to M. Durival, who, as you will see by the answer enclosed, informs me, that there was a million paid by the Royal Treasury, on the 10th of June, 1776. This is the very million about which Mr. Thomson inquires, as I have kept an account of the other two millions, which were also furnished by the Royal Treasury, viz. the one million in January and April, 1777, the other in July and October of the same year, as well as that furnished by the Farmers-General in June, 1777.

Here, then, are the three millions exactly, which were given by the King before the treaty of 1778, and that furnished by the Farmers-General. Nothing then remains to be known, but who received the first million in June, 1776. It could not be myself, as I was not charged with the business of Congress until January, 1777. I therefore requested of M. Durival a copy of the receipt for the one million. You have the answer, which he returned to me. I have written to him again, renewing my request; but, as the courier is just setting off, I cannot wait to give you his answer, but you will receive it in my next, if I obtain one. In the mean while, I beg you will receive the assurances of the sentiments of respect, with which I have the honor to be, my dear Sir, &c.

Grand.

FROM. M. DURIVAL TO MR. GRAND.

Translation.

Versailles, 10 September, 1786.

SIR,

I have laid before the Count de Vergennes, as you seemed to desire, the letter which you did me the honor to write yesterday. The minister persists in the opinion, that the receipt, the copy of which you request, has no relation to the business with which you were intrusted on behalf of Congress, and that this document would be useless in the new point of view in which you have placed it. Indeed, Sir, it is easy for you to prove, that the money in question was not delivered by the Royal Treasury into your hands, as you did not begin to be charged with the business of Congress until January, 1777, and the receipt for that money is of the 10th of June, 1776. I have the honor to be, with perfect attachment, Sir, &c.

DURIVAL.

FROM MR. GRAND TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

Paris, 12 September, 1786.

SIR,

I hazard a letter in hopes it may be able to join that of the 9th at L'Orient, in order to forward to you the answer I have just received from M. Durival. You will there see, that, notwithstanding my entreaty, the minister himself refuses to give me a copy of the receipt which I asked for. I cannot conceive the reason for this reserve, more especially since, if there has been a million paid, he who has received it has kept the account, and it must in time be known. I shall

hear with pleasure, that you have been more fortunate in this respect in America than I have been in France; and I repeat to you the assurance of the sentiments of regard, with which I have the honor to be, &c.

GRAND.

FROM THOMAS PERCIVAL TO B. FRANKLIN.

Influence of Manufacturing Establishments on the Purity of the Air. — Priestley, Kippis, Price.

Manchester, 27 October, 1786.

DEAR SIR,

I received, with very great pleasure, your obliging letter by Mr. Vaughan; and delivered to our Literary Society the volume of American Philosophical Transactions which accompanied it. The donation was highly acceptable, both from its intrinsic value, and as a pledge of friendly correspondence with the excellent institution over which you preside. The formal acknowledgment of such favors is the official duty of our secretaries; and they have been directed to return our thanks in the most grateful and respectful terms, together with the present of our Memoirs. The diffusion of the arts and sciences through so many extensive regions of the globe must afford a subject of contemplation peculiarly satisfactory to your mind; as you cannot but feel the delightful consciousness of having been a principal instrument, under Providence, in its accomplishment. And I hope that sun, which has so long blessed the nations, will not set till the interests of truth and knowledge, of civil and religious liberty, are firmly established in the western hemisphere, which it now enlightens.

Your valuable papers on Chimneys, and on the Consumption of Smoke, have arrived very seasonably to aid a plan which I have in view. It is my intention to offer a representation to our magistrates, at the ensuing Quarter Sessions, of the expediency and necessity of adopting some measures to purify the air of Manchester; for they are guardians of the health, as well as of the morals, of their fellow citizens. And, though works, which are essential to the prosecution of trade, ought not to be deemed nuisances, the persons who are engaged in them should be induced or compelled to conduct them in a manner, as little injurious as possible to the public. This town now contains about forty-six thousand inhabitants; and I observe, with concern, an annual and large increase of pulmonic complaints. To the offensive fumes which we breathe, I apprehend, these distressing and fatal maladies are chiefly to be ascribed. The smoke from the velvet dress works is particularly acrimonious and offensive to the lungs; and it is so copious, even from a single chimney, as to scatter a shower of soot over a very considerable space. I shall think myself much obliged by the communication of any hints, that your knowledge or experience may suggest on this subject, which is interesting not only to Manchester, but to most other manufacturing towns.

We have now established here an institution on a plan similar to the late Academy at Warrington; and, in conjunction with this, a medical school is formed, which seems to bid fair for eminent success. I will send you our *Reports*, when the Manchester Memoirs are forwarded to you.

Dr. and Mrs. Priestley have been here this summer, together with Dr. Kippis. Dr. Priestley is not in a

very good state of health, having had a return of the complaint with which he was visited several years ago; but his spirits and ardor do not desert him. He is at this time zealously engaged in attempts to convert the Jews to Christianity. For this undertaking he believes himself peculiarly well fitted, as it is a part of his creed, that Jesus Christ was the actual son of Joseph, and a lineal descendant of the house of David. But the Jewish rabbis have declared their resolution to enter into no discussion on these topics, being forbidden, as they allege, by their most sacred laws.

Dr. Kippis is busied with the Life of Captain Cook, which is to be published separately, as well as in the *Biographia Britannica.* Our excellent friend, Dr. Price, is, I hear, deeply affected with the death of his wife. A fresh paralytic stroke carried her off about a month since. The Doctor is preparing for the press a volume of Sermons in support of the Arian doctrine, and an enlarged edition of his valuable "Review of the Principal Questions and Difficulties in Morals." The College of Physicians in London have just printed a specimen of a new *Pharmacopœia.* The President has favored me with a copy; and I think the Dispensatory, on the whole, is likely to be much improved.

I have already transmitted, in a letter to Dr. Rush, my grateful acknowledgments to the American Philosophical Society for the honor of being elected into their body. To you I am doubtless much indebted for this mark of distinction. Accept my best thanks; and believe me to be, with the most cordial respect and esteem, dear Sir, &c.

THOMAS PERCIVAL.

TO WILLIAM HUNTER.

Condition of America.

Philadelphia, 24 November, 1786.

MY DEAR OLD FRIEND,

It rejoiced me much to learn, by your kind letter of February last, which I received about ten days since, that you are still in the land of the living; and that you are still at Bath, the very place that I think gives you the best chance of passing the evening of life agreeably. I too am got into my *niche*, after being kept out of it twenty-four years by foreign employments. It is a very good house that I built so long ago to retire into, without being able till now to enjoy it. I am again surrounded by my friends, with a fine family of grandchildren about my knees, and an affectionate good daughter and son-in-law to take care of me. And, after fifty years' public service, I have the pleasure to find the esteem of my country with regard to me undiminished; the late reëlection of me to the presidentship, notwithstanding the different parties we are split into, being absolutely unanimous. This I tell you, not merely to indulge my own vanity, but because I know you love me, and will be pleased to hear of whatever happens that is agreeable to your friend.

I find Mr. Anstey,* whom you recommend to me, a very agreeable, sensible man, and shall render him any service that may lie in my power. I thank you for the "New Bath Guide." I had read it formerly, but it has afforded me fresh pleasure.

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* Mr. Anstey was a commissioner sent over by the British governmen to settle the affairs of the refugees in America.

Your newspapers, to please honest *John Bull*, paint our situation here in frightful colors, as if we were very miserable since we broke our connexion with him. But I will give you some remarks by which you may form your own judgment. Our husbandmen, who are the bulk of the nation, have had plentiful crops, their produce sells at high prices and for ready, hard money; wheat, for instance, at eight shillings, and eight shillings and sixpence, a bushel. Our working people are all employed and get high wages, are well fed and well clad. Our estates in houses are trebled in value by the rising of rents since the Revolution. Buildings in Philadelphia increase amazingly, besides small towns rising in every quarter of the country. The laws govern, justice is well administered, and property as secure as in any country on the globe. Our wilderness lands are daily buying up by new settlers, and our settlements extend rapidly to the westward. European goods were never so cheaply afforded us, as since Britain has no longer the monopoly of supplying us In short, all among us may be happy, who have happy dispositions; such being necessary to happiness even in Paradise.

I speak these things of Pennsylvania, with which I am most acquainted. As to the other States, when I read in all the papers of the extravagant rejoicings every 4th of July, the day on which was signed the Declaration of Independence, I am convinced, that none of them are discontented with the Revolution. Adieu, my dear friend, and believe me ever, with sincere esteem and affection, yours most truly,

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM M. DE SAUSSURE TO B. FRANKLIN.

Travels in the Alps. — Account of the first Ascent to the Summit of Mont Blanc by M. Paccard, and M. de Saussure's unsuccessful Attempt.

Translation.

Geneva, 17 December, 1786.

SIR,

I have taken the liberty of requesting Messrs. Van Neck & Co. of London, to forward to you in America the second volume of my *Voyages dans les Alpes*. I am very desirous, that this work should be found worthy of your approbation, or at least, that you should not think it was hardly worth sending so far. Although there are few branches of human knowledge, with which you are unacquainted, and in which you have not given proofs of your genius, you have appeared to take an especial interest in Natural Philosophy, and particularly Electricity and Meteorology. In this volume you will find chapters of considerable length on these two subjects.

The structure of mountains was particularly the object of my research in these travels; but at the same time I thought I ought to take the opportunity of studying the constitution of the atmosphere at heights which are seldom reached; and for this purpose I invented a very convenient and sensitive electrometer, which you will find described in the volume, and with which I made some curious experiments upon the electricity of the air in clear weather. I found this electricity stronger in proportion as the place of observation was higher and more insulated. I am very desirous to try the same experiment on the summit of Mont Blanc, which is, as you know, the highest mountain of the old continent. I almost despaired of

being able to reach it, when I finished the volume which I now have the honor to send. You will there see an account of my fruitless attempts. Since then, however, I have obtained information, which gives me an almost certain prospect of doing it; at least, if I am alive and in good health next June.

Six peasants from Chamouni made the attempt at the beginning of last summer, and went to a great height, though they did not reach the summit. One of them, who got lost while looking after crystals, was obliged to pass the night in the snows at a very elevated point. A terrible hailstorm came on, and his companions gave him up for lost. He suffered but little, however. The next morning the weather was extremely fine, and, as it was very early, he had time to examine carefully the different approaches to the summit, and to fix upon the proper path to reach it.

On his return to Chamouni, he said nothing to his companions, but he communicated his views to a young physician named Paccard, who had also several times attempted without success to scale the mountain. They went and slept on the top of the rocks at the entrance of the snows, and, starting again at break of day on the following morning, being the 8th of August, they reached the summit between six and seven in the evening. They were seen there with spyglasses from Chamouni. The Baron de Garsdorf even followed them with a good telescope and marked out their path. They returned the same day, or rather night, with excessive fatigue and danger, their faces burnt, swollen, and even bleeding; and they were almost blind from the reflection from the snow. In fact, they had taken no precautions whatever.*

* M. Paccard was accompanied by M. Balmat. They published an account of this enterprise, entitled, *Premier Voyage à la Cime de la plus haute Montagne du Continent.*

As soon as I learned the success of their enterprise, I sent a number of peasants to build me a place of shelter among the snows near some insulated rocks, which are half way up the snowy part of the mountain. My intention was to go and sleep there, and thus to divide the terrible day's work, which my predecessors had been obliged to encounter. I went to Chamouni, and slept as they had done at the entrance of the snows, but there came on in the night a furious storm and much snow, which rendered the mountain inaccessible for the rest of the season. But my hut is still standing, and I hope to accomplish my project next summer. I shall need your ingenuity, when in that situation, to make my observations as useful as they should be.* I am, with the most perfect esteem, Sir, &c.

DE SAUSSURE.

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* His subsequent attempt was successful. He reached the summit of Mont Blanc on the 3d of August, 1787. An account of his ascent is contained in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, for October of that year. The following beautiful tribute to the genius and character of M. de Saussure is from the pen of Sir Humphrey Davy.

"Educated amidst the magnificent scenery of the Alps, this illustrious person felt in his early days the warmest admiration of the study of geology, and his whole life was more or less devoted to it. Possessing from nature a penetrating genius, he assisted her efforts by all the refinements and resources of science. In his researches he spared no labor, and yielded nothing to the common sentiment of self-love. A constant inhabitant of the mountains, he has exceeded all other writers in his descriptions of them. His delineations are equally vivid and correct; and, as far as mere language is capable, they awaken pictures in the mind. De Saussure has presented the rare instance of a powerful imagination associated with the coolest judgment; of the brilliancy of ideas and feelings of the poet, connected with the minute researches and deep sagacity of the philosopher."

TO THOMAS PAINE.*

Dissuading him from publishing a Work of an irreligious Tendency.

[Date uncertain.]

DEAR SIR,

I have read your manuscript with some attention. By the argument it contains against a particular Providence, though you allow a general Providence, you strike at the foundations of all religion. For without the belief of a Providence, that takes cognizance of, guards, and guides, and may favor particular persons, there is no motive to worship a Deity, to fear his displeasure, or to pray for his protection. I will not enter into any discussion of your principles, though you seem to desire it. At present I shall only give you my opinion, that, though your reasonings are subtile, and may prevail with some readers, you will not succeed so as to change the general sentiments of mankind on that subject, and the consequence of printing this piece will

* This letter was first published by William Temple Franklin, but without the name of the person to whom it was directed. He probably transcribed it from a rough draft, in which the name was not mentioned It is supposed to have been written to Thomas Paine, and the circumstances are such as to render this supposition in the highest degree probable In the early part of the Revolution, Paine was in the habit of consulting Dr. Franklin about his political writings, and the latter is understood to have aided Paine, at least by his suggestions and advice, in preparing some of his celebrated political essays. Paine was in America when Dr. Franklin returned from France, and often consulted him respecting his private affairs; and, when he went to Europe with his model of a newly invented bridge, in which he thought he had made essential improvements upon former inventions in the art of building bridges, Dr. Franklin gave him letters of introduction to the Duke de la Rochefoucauld, M. le Veillard, and some of his other friends in Paris. It may be added, moreover, that the remarks in the above etter are strictly applicable to the deistical writings, which Paine afterwards published.

be, a great deal of odium drawn upon yourself, mischief to you, and no benefit to others. He that spits against the wind, spits in his own face.

But, were you to succeed, do you imagine any good would be done by it? You yourself may find it easy to live a virtuous life, without the assistance afforded by religion; you having a clear perception of the advantages of virtue, and the disadvantages of vice, and possessing a strength of resolution sufficient to enable you to resist common temptations. But think how great a portion of mankind consists of weak and ignorant men and women, and of inexperienced, inconsiderate youth of both sexes, who have need of the motives of religion to restrain them from vice, to support their virtue, and retain them in the practice of it till it becomes *habitual*, which is the great point for its security. And perhaps you are indebted to her originally, that is, to your religious education, for the habits of virtue upon which you now justly value yourself. You might easily display your excellent talents of reasoning upon a less hazardous subject, and thereby obtain a rank with our most distinguished authors. For among us it is not necessary, as among the Hottentots, that a youth, to be raised into the company of men, should prove his manhood by beating his mother.

I would advise you, therefore, not to attempt unchaining the tiger, but to burn this piece before it is seen by any other person; whereby you will save yourself a great deal of mortification by the enemies it may raise against you, and perhaps a good deal of regret and repentance. If men are so wicked *with religion*, what would they be *if without it*. I intend this letter itself as a *proof* of my friendship, and therefore add no *professions* to it; but subscribe simply yours,

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM RICHARD PRICE TO B. FRANKLIN.

Newington Green, 26 January, 1787.

DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter by Mr. Nicklin gave me great pleasure. I know your time and attention must be much engaged by a variety of important business, and therefore every line I receive from you I must reckon a greater favor than I have reason to expect. Since the reception of your letter, I have heard by Mr. Vaughan, that you continue well, and Dr. Rush has informed me, that you think you have received benefit from the remedy recommended in Dr. Faulkner's book. Such accounts cannot but be agreeable to me, and it is my ardent wish, that your comfort and usefulness may be continued as long as possible. I have myself been a great sufferer; I mean, by the loss of Mrs. Price, who died of the palsy in September last, after a long period of languor and decrepitude. This has made me feel like a forsaken creature, and shocked my spirits sadly.

We have an acquisition here by the arrival of Mrs. Vaughan and her daughters, and we hope Mr. Vaughan will not stay long after them. I return you many thanks for your intention to send me the second volume of the Transactions of the Philosophical Society at Philadelphia; but, through some mistake, I have not yet received it. The value of it is, I find, much increased by your communications.

I have sent to you by Dr. White a volume of Sermons, which I have just published. I could almost wish you would not look into them. I mean to serve the cause of truth and virtue by them, but I may be much mistaken, and I cannot but fear they are not sufficiently fit for your perusal. I have been happy in the conversation of Dr. White and Dr. Provost; and, as

it seems the members of the Episcopal Church in America must have bishops, I am glad they have directed their views to gentlemen so worthy and liberal. I find there are great disorders in some of the United States; but you comfort me by saying they will all end well. Your advice and counsels will, I doubt not, contribute much to this end. That you may enjoy this and every other satisfaction, that can make the remainder of a life, that will be one of the most distinguished in future annals, honorable and happy, is, my dear friend, the wish of yours most gratefully and affectionately,

RICHARD PRICE.

P. S. Baron Maseres informs me, that in a letter to him you gave an intimation of a method of paying off the national debt, which you thought easier and cheaper than any method that has been yet proposed. He has desired me to present his respects to you, and to tell you, that he wishes to know what this method is. You did, he says, encourage him in your letter, to expect that you would give him this information. The advertisement of the expected return of a comet next year, I convey to you by the desire of Dr. Maskelyne.

FROM JOHN ADAMS TO B. FRANKLIN.

Sending a Copy of his Work on the Constitutions and Government of the United States.

Grosvenor Square, 27 January, 1787.

SIR,

Dr. White has been so obliging to me as to take with him to America two volumes, one for your Excellency and one for the Philosophical Society of Philadelphia, of a production of mine, suggested by the late popular

frenzy in Massachusetts and New Hampshire. It contains my confession of political faith, and, if it is heresy, I shall, I suppose, be cast out of communion. But it is the only sense in which I am or ever was a republican, and in such times I hold concealment of sentiments to be no better than countenancing sedition. Let me beg your Excellency's acceptance of one volume, and that you would present the other to the Philosophical Society with my respectful thanks for the volume of their Transactions, transmitted to me by your Excellency in their name. That work is in good reputation here.

Mr. Dilly has often requested me to mention to your Excellency his great desire of publishing a new edition of your works, and a sketch of your life; and his inclination is much quickened, since he learned that you had been advised to write it with your own hand. Enclosed is a note, which I received from him this morning. Mr. Dilly is as honest a man as any of the trade here, and as much esteemed by men of letters; so that I believe you may depend upon his honor and skill. My regards to Mr. Franklin and Mr. Bache, if you please. With great respect, I have the honor to be, Sir, &c. JOHN ADAMS.

TO CHARLES THOMSON, SECRETARY OF CONGRESS.

Concerning a Million of Livres given by the King of France.

Philadelphia, 27 January, 1787.

DEAR FRIEND,

You may remember, that in the correspondence between us in June last, on the subject of a million *free gift* of the King of France, acknowledged in our contract to have been received, but which did not appear

to be accounted for in our banker's accounts, unless it should be the same with the million said to be received from the Farmers-General, I mentioned, that an explanation might doubtless be easily obtained by writing to Mr. Grand, or Mr. Jefferson. I know not whether you have accordingly written to either of them; but, being desirous that the matter should speedily be cleared up, I wrote myself to Mr. Grand a letter upon it, of which I now enclose a copy, with his answers, and several letters from M. Durival, who is *Chef du Bureau des Fonds* (and has under his care the finance) *des Affaires Etrangères.**

You will see by these letters, that the million in question was delivered to somebody on the 10th of June, 1776, but it does not appear to whom. It is clear, however, that it could not be to Mr. Grand nor to the Commissioners from Congress; for we did not meet in France till the end of December, 1776, or beginning of January 1777, and that banker was not charged before with our affairs.

By the minister's reserve in refusing him a copy of the receipt, I conjecture it must be money advanced for our use to M. de Beaumarchais, and that it is a *mystère du cabinet*, which perhaps should not be further inquired into, unless necessary to guard against more demands than may be just from that agent; for it may well be supposed, that, if the court furnished him with the means of supplying us, they may not be willing to furnish authentic proofs of such a transaction so early in our dispute with Britain. Pray tell me, has he dropped his demands, or does he still continue to worry you with them?

I should like to have these original letters returned

* See these letters above, pp. 265, 269-272.

to me, but you may, if you please, keep copies of them. It is true, the million in question makes no difference in your accounts with the King of France, it not being mentioned or charged, as so much lent and to be repaid, but stated as freely given. Yet, if it was put into the hands of any of your agents, or ministers, they ought certainly to account for it. I do not recollect whether Mr. Deane had arrived in France before the 10th of June, 1776;* but from his great want of money, when I joined him a few months after, I hardly think it could have been paid to him. Possibly Mr. Jefferson may obtain the information, though Mr. Grand could not, and I wish he may be directed to make the inquiry, as I know he would do it directly; I mean, if, by Hortalez and Co.'s further demands, or for any other reason, such an inquiry should be thought necessary.† I am, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

TO ALEXANDER SMALL.

Book of Common Prayer.—England.—Refugees.

Philadelphia, 19 February, 1787.

DEAR FRIEND,

I received your favor of June last, and thank you for the kind congratulations contained in it. What you have heard of my malady is true, "that it does not grow worse." Thanks be to God, I still enjoy

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* Deane did not arrive in Paris till the first week in July.

† This matter was not cleared up till 1794, when Gouverneur Morris was American Minister in Paris. By application to the government he procured a copy of the receipt, which had been given by the person who received the million of livres on the 10th of June, 1776. It proved to be Beaumarchais, as Dr. Franklin had conjectured. See SPARKS's *Life of Gouverneur Morris*, Vol. II. p. 446.

While the correspondence with the banker in Paris was going on,

pleasure in the society of my friends and books, and much more in the prosperity of my country, concerning which your people are continually deceiving themselves.

I am glad the improvement of the Book of Common Prayer* has met with your approbation, and that of good Mrs. Baldwin. It is not yet, that I know of, received in public practice anywhere; but, as it is said that good motions never die, perhaps in time it may be found useful.

I read with pleasure the account you gave of the flourishing state of your commerce and manufactures, and of the plenty you have of resources to carry the nation through all its difficulties. You have one of the finest countries in the world, and, if you can be cured of the folly of making war for trade, (in which wars more has been always expended than the profits of any trade can compensate,) you may make it one of the happiest. Make the best of your own natural advantages, instead of endeavouring to diminish those of other nations, and there is no doubt but that you may yet prosper and flourish. Your beginning to consider France no longer as a natural enemy, is a mark of progress in the good sense of the nation, of which posterity will find the benefit, in the rarity of wars, the diminution of taxes, and increase of riches.

As to the refugees, whom you think we were so impolitic in rejecting, I do not find that they are missed here, or that anybody regrets their absence. And certainly they must be happier where they are, under the government they admire; and be better received among a people, whose cause they espoused and fought for,

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Dr. Franklin's enemies in Congress made themselves busy in propagating a report, that he was a defaulter to the amount of one million of livres, and thus gave currency to a most unjust and injurious suspicion against him throughout the country.

* See the letter to Granville Sharp, above, p 205.

than among those who cannot so soon have forgotten the destruction of their habitations, and the spilt blood of their dearest friends and near relations.

I often think with great pleasure on the happy days I passed in England with my and your learned and ingenious friends, who have left us to join the majority in the world of spirits. Every one of them now knows more than all of us they have left behind. It is to me a comfortable reflection, that, since we must live for ever in a future state, there is a sufficient stock of amusement in reserve for us, to be found in constantly learning something new to eternity, the present quantity of human ignorance infinitely exceeding that of human knowledge. Adieu, my dear friend, and believe me, in whatever world, yours most affectionately,

B. Franklin,
in his eighty-second year.

TO NEVIL MASKELYNE.

Philadelphia, 29 March, 1787.

Reverend and dear Sir,

The writer of the enclosed paper concerning the variation of the compass, and the important use which he supposes may be made of that variation, not being satisfied with the judgment of some of our principal mathematicians here, has earnestly desired me to communicate it to some of my learned friends in Europe.* I know no one better acquainted with the subject than yourself, and, as I cannot refuse complying with his request, I beg you will excuse my giving you this trouble, and favor me with a line expressing your

* The writer here alluded to was John Churchman, who published a work, entitled *The Magnetic Atlas*, in which he advanced a new theory of the variation of the compass.

opinion; which condescension will very much oblige, Sir, your most obedient servant,

B. FRANKLIN.*

FROM JOHN SEVIER TO B. FRANKLIN.

Concerning the New State of Franklin.

State of Franklin, Mount Pleasant, 9 April, 1787.

SIR,

Permit me to introduce to your Excellency the subject of our new disputed government. In the year 1784, in the month of June, the legislature of North Carolina ceded to Congress all their claim to the lands west of the Appalachian Mountains, on conditions I make no doubt you are acquainted with, as the act was shortly after laid before Congress. The inhabitants of this country, well knowing that the Congress of the United States would accept the cession, and having no idea that North Carolina would attempt repealing the act, formed themselves into a separate and independent State by the name of *Franklin*.

In November following, North Carolina repealed this act of cession. In May, 1785, Congress took the several acts under their consideration, and entered into resolves respecting the same, the purport of which, I presume, you are acquainted with. The government of Franklin was carried on unmolested by North Carolina, until November, 1785, when that legislature passed an act, allowing the people in some of our counties to hold elections under certain regulations unknown to any former law; whereby a few, from disaffection and disappointment, might have it in their power to elect persons, who were to be considered the legal delega-

* See the answer to this letter, Vol. VI. p. 571.

tion of the people. This was done and countenanced; and at their last session, in November, 1786, they have undertaken to reassume their jurisdiction and sovereignty over the State of Franklin, notwithstanding the whole of their adherents do not exceed two or three hundred against a majority of at least seven thousand effective militia. They have, contrary to the interest of the people in two of the counties, to wit, Washington and Sullivan, by their acts removed the former places of holding courts to certain places convenient to the disaffected, as we conceive, in order that they might have a pretext to prevaricate upon.

I have thus given your Excellency the outlines of our past and present situation, and beg leave to inform you, that, from your known patriotic and benevolent disposition, as also your great experience and wisdom, I am, by and with the advice of our Council of State, induced to make this application, that, should you, from this simple statement of the several occurrences, think our cause so laudable, as to give us your approbation, you would be pleased to condescend to write on the subject. And any advice, instruction, or encouragement, you may think we shall deserve, will be acknowledged in the most grateful manner.

We have been informed, that your Excellency some time since did us the honor to write to us on the subject of our State; if so, unfortunately for us, the letters have miscarried, and are not come to hand. Many safe conveyances might be had. A letter may be sent by the bearer, Captain John Woods, if he should return by the way of Franklin; or, if it were directed to the care of the Governor of Georgia, it would come safe; and perhaps by a number of people who travel to this country. I have the honor to be, Sir, &c.

John Sevier.

TO M. LE VEILLARD.

Philadelphia, 15 April, 1787.

—— I am entirely of your opinion, that our independence is not quite complete, till we have discharged our public debt. This State is not behindhand in its proportion; and those, which are in arrear, are actually employed in contriving means to discharge their respective balances; but they are not all equally diligent in the business, nor equally successful. The whole will, however, be paid, I am persuaded, in a few years.

The English have not yet delivered up the posts on our frontier, agreeably to treaty. The pretence is, that our merchants here have not paid their debts. I was a little provoked when I first heard this, and I wrote some remarks upon it, which I send you.* They have been written near a year, but I have not yet published them, being unwilling to encourage any of our people, who may be able to pay, in their neglect of that duty. The paper is therefore only for your amusement, and that of our excellent friend the Duke de la Rochefoucauld.

As to my malady, concerning which you so kindly inquire, I have never had the least doubt of its being the stone; and I am sensible that it has increased; but on the whole it does not give me more pain than when at Passy. People who live long, who will drink of the cup of life to the very bottom, must expect to meet with some of the usual dregs; and when I reflect on the number of terrible maladies human nature is subject to, I think myself favored in having to my share only the stone and gout.

You were right in conjecturing, that I wrote the re-

* See *The Retort Courteous*, Vol. II. p. 498.

marks on the "*Thoughts concerning Executive Justice.*"* I have no copy of those remarks at hand, and forget how the saying was introduced, that it is better a thousand guilty persons should escape, than one innocent suffer. Your criticisms thereon appear to be just, and I imagine you may have misapprehended my intention in mentioning it. I always thought, with you, that the prejudice in Europe, which supposes a family dishonored by the punishment of one of its members, was very absurd; it being on the contrary my opinion, that a rogue hanged out of a family does it more honor than ten that live in it. ——

B. Franklin.

TO THE DUKE DE LA ROCHEFOUCAULD.

Reply to his Congratulations. — United States. — Constitutions of the States. — Introduces Thomas Paine.

Philadelphia, 15 April, 1787.

I have been happy in receiving three very kind letters from my greatly respected and esteemed friend, since my being in America. They are dated November 30th, 1785, February 8th, 1786, and January 14th, 1787. In mine of this date to M. le Veillard, I have made the best apology I could for my being so bad a correspondent. I will not trouble you with a repetition of it, as I know you often see him. I will only confess my fault, and trust to your candor and goodness for my pardon.

Your friendly congratulations on my arrival and reception here were very obliging. The latter was, as you have heard, extremely flattering. The two parties

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* See Vol. II. p. 478.

in the Assembly and Council, the constitutionists and anti-constitutionists, joined in requesting my service as counsellor, and afterwards in electing me as President. Of seventy-four members in Council and Assembly, who voted by ballot, there was in my first election but one negative, besides my own; and in the second, after a year's service, only my own. And I experience, from all the principal people in the government, every attention and assistance that can be desired towards making the task as little burdensome to me as possible. So I am going on very comfortably hitherto with my second year, and I do not at present see any likelihood of a change; but future events are always uncertain, being governed by Providence or subject to chances; and popular favor is very precarious, being sometimes *lost* as well as *gained* by good actions; so I do not depend on a continuance of my present happiness, and therefore shall not be surprised, if, before my time of service expires, something should happen to diminish it.

These States in general enjoy peace and plenty. There have been some disorders in the Massachusetts and Rhode Island governments; those in the former are quelled for the present; those of the latter, being contentions for and against paper money, will probably continue some time. Maryland too is divided on the same subject, the Assembly being for it, and the Senate against it. Each is now employed in endeavouring to gain the people to its party against the next elections, and it is probable the Assembly may prevail. Paper money in moderate quantities has been found beneficial; when more than the occasions of commerce require, it depreciated and was mischievous; and the populace are apt to demand more than is necessary. In this State we have some, and it is useful, and I do not hear any clamor for more.

There seems to be but little thought at present in the particular States, of mending their particular constitutions; but the grand Federal Constitution * is generally blamed as not having given sufficient powers to Congress, the federal head. A convention is therefore appointed to revise that constitution, and propose a better. You will see by the enclosed paper, that your friend is to be one in that business, though he doubts his malady may not permit his giving constant attendance. I am glad to see, that you are named as one of a General Assembly to be convened in France. I flatter myself, that great good may accrue to that dear nation from the deliberations of such an assembly. I pray God to give it his blessing.

I sympathize with you and the family most sincerely, in the great loss sustained by the decease of that excellent woman.† It must be indeed a heavy one. My best wishes attend those that remain, and that the happiness of your sweet domestic society may long continue without such another interruption.

I send herewith a volume of the Transactions of our Philosophical Society for you, another for M. de Condorcet, and a third for the Academy. The war had interrupted our attempts to improve ourselves in scientific matters, but we now begin to resume them.

The bearer of this is Mr. Paine, the author of a famous piece, entitled *Common Sense*, published here with great effect on the minds of the people at the beginning of the Revolution. He is an ingenious, honest man; and as such I beg leave to recommend him to your civilities. He carries with him the model of a bridge of a new construction, his own invention, concerning which I intended to have recommended him to M. Pey-

* The Old Confederation.

† The Duchess d'Enville, mother of the Duke de la Rochefoucauld.—W. T. F.

ronnet, but I hear he is no more. You can easily procure Mr. Paine a sight of the models and drawings of the collection appertaining to the *Ponts et Chaussées;* they must afford him useful lights on the subject. We want a bridge over our river Schuylkill, and have no artist here regularly bred to that kind of architecture.

My grandsons are very sensible of the honor of your remembrance, and desire me to present their respects. With the most sincere and perfect esteem and attachment, I am ever, my dear friend, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO THE MARQUIS DE CHASTELLUX.

His Journal of Travels.— Assembly of Notables.

Philadelphia, 17 April, 1787.

DEAR SIR,

Your most pleasing letter, accompanied by the invaluable present of your Journal,* and translation of Colonel Humphreys's poem, came to hand but lately, though dated in June last. I believe they have been in the West Indies. They have given me a great deal of pleasure in the perusal, as every thing of yours always did. The portrait you have made of our country and people is what in painting is called *a handsome likeness*, for which we are much obliged to you. We shall be the better for it, if we endeavour to merit what you kindly say in our favor, and to correct what you justly censure. I am told the Journal is translated into English, and printed in one of the States, I know not which, not having seen the translation.

The newspapers tell us, that you are about to have an Assembly of Notables, to consult on improvements of your government. It is somewhat singular, that we

* Journal of Travels in America.

should be engaged in the same project here at the same time; but so it is, and a convention for the purpose of revising and amending our federal constitution is to meet at this place next month. I hope both assemblies will be blessed with success, and that their deliberations and counsels may promote the happiness of both nations.

In the State of Pennsylvania, government, notwithstanding our parties, goes on at present very smoothly, so that I have much less trouble in my station than was expected. Massachusetts has lately been disturbed by some disorderly people; but they are now quelled. The rest of the States go on pretty well, except some dissensions in Rhode Island and Maryland respecting paper money. Mr. Paine, whom you know, and who undertakes to deliver this letter to you, can give you full information of our affairs, and therefore I need not enlarge upon them. I beg leave to recommend him to your civilities. I have fulfilled all your commissions to the ladies here, who are much flattered by your kind remembrance of them. My family join in every sentiment of esteem and respect with, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. Franklin.

TO MESSRS. THE ABBES CHALUT AND ARNAUD.

Philadelphia, 17 April, 1787.

Dear Friends,

Your reflections on our situation, compared with that of many nations of Europe, are very sensible and just. Let me add, that only a virtuous people are capable of freedom. As nations become corrupt and vicious, they have more need of masters.

Our public affairs go on as well as can reasonably

be expected, after so great an overturning. We have had some disorders in different parts of the country, but we arrange them as they arise, and are daily mending and improving; so that I have no doubt but all will come right in time. Yours,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

Attempts of the Enemies of America to disparage that Country. — Constitutions of the States. — Indian Vocabularies.

Philadelphia, 17 April, 1787.

DEAR FRIEND,

I received the kind letter you did me the honor of writing, in February, 1786. The indolence of old age, and the perpetual teasing of too much business, have made me so bad a correspondent, that I have hardly written a letter to any friend in Europe during the last twelvemonth; but, as I have always a pleasure in hearing from them, which I cannot expect will be continued if I do not write to them, I again take up my pen, and begin with those whose correspondence is of the greatest value; among which I reckon that of the Marquis de Lafayette.

I was glad to hear of your safe return to Paris, after so long and fatiguing a journey. That is the place where your enlightened zeal for the welfare of our country can employ itself most to our advantage, and I know it is always at work and indefatigable. Our enemies are, as you observe, very industrious in depreciating our national character. Their abuse sometimes provokes me, and I am almost ready to retaliate; but I have held my hand, though there is abundant room for recrimination; because I would do nothing

that might hasten another quarrel by exasperating those, who are still sore from their late disgraces. Perhaps it may be best, that they should please themselves with fancying us weak, and poor, and divided, and friendless; they may then not be jealous of our growing strength, which, since the peace, does really make rapid progress, and may be less intent on interrupting it.

I do not wonder that the Germans, who know little of free constitutions, should be ready to suppose that such cannot support themselves. We think they may, and we hope to prove it. That there should be faults in our first sketches or plans of government is not surprising; rather, considering the times, and the circumstances under which they were formed, it is surprising that the faults are so few. Those in the general confederating articles are now about to be considered in a convention called for that express purpose; these will indeed be the most difficult to rectify. Those of particular States will undoubtedly be rectified, as their inconveniences shall by experience be made manifest. And, whatever difference of sentiment there may be among us respecting particular regulations, the enthusiastic rejoicings, with which the day of declared independence is annually celebrated, demonstrate the universal satisfaction of the people with the Revolution and its grand principles.

I enclose the vocabulary you sent me, with the words of the Shawanese and Delaware languages, which Colonel Harmar has procured for me. He is promised one more complete, which I shall send you as soon as it comes to my hands.

My grandson, whom you so kindly inquire after, is at his estate in the Jerseys, and amuses himself with cultivating his lands. I wish he would seriously make a business of it, and renounce all thoughts of public em-

ployment, for I think agriculture the most honorable, because the most independent, of all professions. But I believe he hankers a little after Paris, or some other of the polished cities of Europe, thinking the society there preferable to what he meets with in the woods of Ancocas; as it certainly is. If he was now here, he would undoubtedly join with me and the rest of my family, who are much flattered by your remembrance of them, in best wishes for your health and prosperity, and that of your whole amiable fireside. You will allow an old friend of fourscore to say he *loves* your wife, when he adds, and children, and prays God to bless them all. Adieu; and believe me ever yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO THE ABBE MORELLET.

Personal Circumstances. — Freedom of Commerce. — Condition of the United States.

Philadelphia, 22 April, 1787.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

I received, though long after they were written, your very agreeable favors of October 30th, 1785, and February 9th, 1786,* with the pieces enclosed, productions of the Auteuil† *Academy of Belles Lettres.* Your kind and friendly wishes and congratulations are extremely obliging. It gives me an infinite pleasure to find, that I still retain a favorable place in the remembrance of the worthy and the good, whose delightful and instructive society I had the happiness of enjoying while I resided in France.

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* See "Memoires de l'Abbé Morellet," Tom. I. p. 298.

† The residence of Madame Helvetius, with whom the Abbé Morellet, Cabanis, La Roche, and other literary friends passed much of their time. — W. T. F.

But, though I could not leave that dear nation without regret, I certainly did right in coming home. I am here in my *niche* in my own house, in the bosom of my family, my daughter and grandchildren all about me, among my old friends, or the sons of my friends, who equally respect me; and who all speak and understand the same language with me; and you know, that, if a man desires to be useful by the exercise of his mental faculties, he loses half their force when in a foreign country, where he can only express himself in a language with which he is not well acquainted. In short, I enjoy here every opportunity of doing good, and every thing else I could wish for, except repose; and that I may soon expect, either by the cessation of my office, which cannot last more than three years, or by ceasing to live.

I am of the same opinion with you, respecting the freedom of commerce, especially in countries where direct taxes are practicable. This will be our case in time, when our wide-extended country fills up with inhabitants. But at present they are so widely settled, often five or six miles distant from one another in the back country, that the collection of a direct tax is almost impossible, the trouble of the collectors' going from house to house amounting to more than the value of the tax. Nothing can be better expressed than your sentiments are on this point, where you prefer liberty of trading, cultivating, manufacturing, &c., even to civil liberty, this being affected but rarely, the other every hour. Our debt occasioned by the war being heavy, we are under the necessity of using imposts, and every method we can think of, to assist in raising a revenue to discharge it; but in sentiment we are well disposed to abolish duties on importation, as soon as we possibly can afford to do so.

Whatever may be reported by the English in Europe, you may be assured, that our people are almost unanimous in being satisfied with the Revolution. Their unbounded respect for all who were principally concerned in it, whether as warriors or statesmen, and the enthusiastic joy with which the day of the declaration of independence is everywhere annually celebrated, are indubitable proofs of this truth. In one or two of the States there have been some discontents on partial and local subjects; these may have been fomented, as the accounts of them are exaggerated, by our ancient enemies; but they are now nearly suppressed, and the rest of the States enjoy peace and good order, and flourish amazingly. The crops have been good for several years past, the price of country produce high, from foreign demand, and it fetches ready money; rents are high in our towns, which increase fast by new buildings; laborers and artisans have high wages well paid, and vast tracts of new land are continually clearing and rendered fit for cultivation.

The pains you have taken to translate the congratulatory addresses, which I received on my arrival, is a fresh proof of the continuance of your friendship for me, which has afforded me as much satisfaction as the addresses themselves, and you will readily believe, that for me this is not saying little; for this welcome of my fellow citizens has far surpassed my hopes. Popular favor, not the most constant thing in the world, stands by me. My election to the presidency for the second year was unanimous. Will this disposition continue the same for the third? Nothing is more doubtful. A man, who holds a high office, finds himself so often exposed to the danger of disobliging some one in the fulfilment of his duty, that the resentment of those, whom he has thus offended, being greater than

the gratitude of those whom he has served, it almost always happens, that, while he is violently attacked, he is feebly defended. You will not be surprised, then, if you learn, that I have not closed my political career with the same *éclat*, with which it commenced.

I am sorry for what you tell me of the indisposition you have experienced. I sometimes wonder, that Providence does not protect the good from all evil and from every suffering. This should be so in the best of worlds; and, since it is not so, I am piously led to believe, that, if our world is not indeed the best, we must lay the blame on the bad quality of the materials of which it is made. I am, my dear friend, with sincere esteem and affection, ever yours,

B. Franklin.

FROM MATHER BYLES TO B. FRANKLIN.

Boston, 14 May, 1787

Sir,

It is long since I had the pleasure of writing to you by Mr. Edward Church, to thank you for your friendly mention of me in a letter, that I find was transmitted to the University of Aberdeen. I doubt whether you ever received it; but, under great weakness by old age and a palsy, I seize this opportunity of employing my daughter to repeat the thanks, which I aimed to express in that letter. Your Excellency is now the man, that I early expected to see you. I congratulate my country upon her having produced a Franklin, and can only add, I wish to meet you where complete felicity and we shall be for ever united. I am, my dear and early friend, your most affectionate and humble servant,

M. Byles.

P. S. I refer you to the bearer, Mr. Pierpont, to inform you how my life, and that of my daughters, have been saved by your *points*.

TO THOMAS JORDAN, LONDON.

Reminiscences of his Friends.

Philadelphia, 18 May, 1787.

DEAR SIR,

I received your very kind letter of February 27th, together with the cask of porter you have been so good as to send me. We have here at present what the French call *une assemblée des notables*, a convention composed of some of the principal people from the several States of our confederation. They did me the honor of dining with me last Wednesday, when the cask was broached, and its contents met with the most cordial reception and universal approbation. In short, the company agreed unanimously, that it was the best porter they had ever tasted. Accept my thanks, a poor return, but all I can make at present.

Your letter reminds me of many happy days we have passed together, and the dear friends with whom we passed them; some of whom, alas! have left us, and we must regret their loss, although our Hawkesworth is become an *Adventurer* in more happy regions; and our Stanley* gone, "where only his own *harmony* can be exceeded." You give me joy in telling me, that you are "on the pinnacle of *content*." Without it no situation can be happy; with it, any. One means of becoming content with one's situation is the comparing it with a worse. Thus, when I consider how

* John Stanley, an eminent musician and composer, became blind at the age of two years. — W. T. F.

many terrible diseases the human body is liable to, I comfort myself, that only three incurable ones have fallen to my share, viz. the gout, the stone, and old age; and that these have not yet deprived me of my natural cheerfulness, my delight in books, and enjoyment of social conversation.

I am glad to hear, that Mr. Fitzmaurice is married, and has an amiable lady and children. It is a better plan than that he once proposed, of getting Mrs. Wright to make him a wax-work wife to sit at the head of his table. For after all, wedlock is the natural state of man. A bachelor is not a complete human being. He is like the odd half of a pair of scissors, which has not yet found its fellow, and therefore is not even half so useful as they might be together.

I hardly know which to admire most; the wonderful discoveries made by Herschel, or the indefatigable ingenuity by which he has been enabled to make them. Let us hope, my friend, that, when free from these bodily embarrassments, we may roam together through some of the systems he has explored, conducted by some of our old companions already acquainted with them. Hawkesworth will enliven our progress with his cheerful, sensible converse, and Stanley accompany the music of the spheres.

Mr. Watmaugh tells me, for I immediately inquired after her, that your daughter is alive and well. I remember her a most promising and beautiful child, and therefore do not wonder, that she is grown, as he says, a fine woman. God bless her and you, my dear friend, and every thing that pertains to you, is the sincere prayer of yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN,
in his eighty-second year.

TO GEORGE WHATLEY.

United States Bank. — Commercial Treaty. — Scheme for Coining. — Dr. Riley.

Philadelphia, 18 May, 1787.

I received duly my good old friend's letter of the 19th of February. I thank you much for your notes on banks; they are just and solid, as far as I can judge of them. Our bank here has met with great opposition, partly from envy, and partly from those who wish an emission of more paper money, which they think the bank influence prevents. But it has stood all attacks, and went on well, notwithstanding the Assembly repealed its charter. A new Assembly has restored it; and the management is so prudent, that I have no doubt of its continuing to go on well. The dividend has never been less than six per cent, nor will that be augmented for some time, as the surplus profit is reserved to face accidents. The dividend of eleven per cent, which was once made, was from a circumstance scarce avoidable. A new company was proposed; and prevented only by admitting a number of new partners. As many of the first set were averse to this, and chose to withdraw, it was necessary to settle their accounts; so all were adjusted, the profits shared that had been accumulated, and the new and old proprietors jointly began on a new and equal footing. Their notes are always instantly paid on demand, and pass on all occasions as readily as silver, because they will always produce silver.

Your medallion is in good company; it is placed with those of Lord Chatham, Lord Camden, Marquis of Rockingham, Sir George Saville, and some others, who honored me with a show of friendly regard, when

in England. I believe I have thanked you for it, but I thank you again.

I believe, with you, that if our Plenipo is desirous of concluding a treaty of commerce, he may need patience. If I were in his place, and not otherwise instructed, I should be apt to say, "Take your own time, gentlemen. If the treaty cannot be made as much to your advantage as to ours, don't make it. I am sure the want of it is not more to our disadvantage than to yours. Let the merchants on both sides treat with one another. *Laissez-les faire.*"

I have never considered attentively the Congress's scheme for coining, and I have it not now at hand, so that at present I can say nothing to it. The chief uses of coining seem to be the ascertaining the fineness of the metals, and saving the time that would otherwise be spent in weighing to ascertain the quality. But the convenience of fixed values to pieces is so great, as to force the currency of some whose stamp is worn off, that should have assured their fineness, and which are evidently not of half their due weight; the case at present with the sixpences in England; which, one with another, do not weigh threepence.

You are now seventy-eight, and I am eighty-two; you tread fast upon my heels; but, though you have more strength and spirit, you cannot come up with me till I stop, which must now be soon; for I am grown so old as to have buried most of the friends of my youth, and I now often hear persons whom I knew when children, called *old* Mr. such-a-one, to distinguish them from their sons now men grown and in business; so that, by living twelve years beyond David's period, I seem to have intruded myself into the company of posterity, when I ought to have been abed and asleep. Yet, had I gone at seventy, it would have

cut off twelve of the most active years of my life, employed too in matters of the greatest importance; but whether I have been doing good or mischief is for time to discover. I only know that I intended well, and I hope all will end well.

Be so good as to present my affectionate respects to Dr. Riley. I am under great obligations to him, and shall write to him shortly. It will be a pleasure to him to know, that my malady does not grow sensibly worse, and that is a great point; for it has always been so tolerable, as not to prevent my enjoying the pleasures of society, and being cheerful in conversation. I owe this in a great measure to his good counsels. Adieu, my dear friend, and believe me ever yours most affectionately, B. Franklin.

FROM COUNT DE CAMPOMANES TO B. FRANKLIN.

American Philosophical Society. — Spanish and Arabic Dictionary.

Translation.

Madrid. 24 May, 1787.

Sir,

I have received your letter of the 4th of Decemoer directed to me as a member of the American Philosophical Society, and accompanied by the second volume of the Transactions of the Society, containing the statutes of that body, a list of its members, and various experiments, observations, and writings chiefly relative to the natural and exact sciences. For this mark of attention I am much indebted to your Excellency, as well as to our Society, in whose works I now feel a personal interest, since they have done me the honor to make me one of their body. In these writings also

I discover so much judgment, sound criticism, and intelligence, in regard to the subjects on which they treat, that I am persuaded they will contribute effectually to extend and promote useful knowledge, the laudable object for which our Society was instituted; and its labors, being renewed by the return of peace, may soon rival those of the most ancient and celebrated institutions of a similar kind in Europe.

In the midst of my public duties at the head of the Council, which station I have held for the last three years, the Society and its illustrious President will always find me ready to contribute to its service, as far as the circumstances of my situation will admit, and as often as subjects occur, which may appear to answer the ends in view.

With the books, which our Academy of History has sent to your Excellency, is the first volume of the *Diccionario Español, Latino-Arabigo*, printed under my direction. I have prefixed to it a discourse on the utility of the study of the Arabic language, particularly for Spaniards; a consideration, which induced me to devote to the study of this language, in my youth, such leisure as I could spare from the business of my profession. The remaining volumes are in press, and I shall take care to forward them as soon as they are published. Your letter, with the gift accompanying it, has renewed the sentiments of gratitude which I entertained for your former favors, and the esteem and friendship which I have always expressed for your character. May your life be prolonged many and happy years. I am, &c.

COUNT DE CAMPOMANES.

FROM THOMAS PAINE TO B. FRANKLIN.

Journey in France. — Paris. — Fireworks. — Model of a Bridge.

Paris, 22 June, 1787.

MY DEAR SIR,

We left New York on the 26th of April, and arrived at Havre de Grace on the 26th of May. I set off in company with M. Gernon, a French gentleman, passenger from America, for Paris. I stayed one day at Rouen, to take a view of the place from whence the kings of England date their origin. There are yet some remains of the Palace of the Dukes of Normandy; but the Parliament House has such a resemblance to Westminster Hall, I mean the great hall as you enter, that, had I not known I had been in Normandy, I might have supposed myself at London. The breadth of the room is nearly seventy feet, and the roof is constructed exactly in the manner of that at Westminster. The country from Havre to Rouen is the richest I ever saw. The crops are abundant, and the cultivation in nice and beautiful order. Every thing appeared to be in fullness; the people very stout, the women exceedingly fair, and the horses of a vast size and very fat. I saw several at Havre that were seventeen hands high. I deposited the model of the bridge at the custom-house, the superintendent of which undertook to send it to Paris as soon as an order should be procured for that purpose, as he did not think himself authorized to do it without, it being an imported article.

I arrived at Paris on the 30th May, and the next day began delivering the letters you were so kind as to honor me with. My reception here, in consequence of them, has been abundantly cordial and friendly.

I have received visits and invitations from all who were in town. The Duke de Rochefoucauld and General Chastellux are in the country. I dined yesterday with an old friend of yours, M. Malesherbes, who is of the new Council of Finances, and who received me with a heartiness of friendship. It must have been a very strong attachment to America, that drew you from this country, for your friends are very numerous and very affectionate.

M. Le Roy has been most attentively kind to me. As he speaks English, there is scarcely a day passes without an interview. He took me a few days ago to see an old friend of yours, M. Buffon; but we were informed by the servant, that he was very ill, and under the operation of medicine, on which we deferred our intention. In the evening he sent me an invitation to see an exhibition of fireworks of a new kind, made of inflammable air. It was done as an experiment. The exhibition was in a room. The performer had two large bladders of air, one under each arm, with pipes from them communicating with the figures to be represented; such as suns, moons, stars, flowers, architecture, and figures of moving machinery. By compressing the bladders and mixing the air, he produced the most beautiful and sudden transitions of light and colors, increased or diminished the motion, and exhibited the most pleasing scene of that kind, that can be imagined.

The model from Havre is not yet arrived, but a letter received from thence yesterday informs me, that it is on the road, and will be here in about eight days. There is a great curiosity here to see it, as bridges have lately been a capital subject. A new bridge is begun over the Seine, opposite the Palais de Bourbon and the Place de Louis Quinze. It is about the breadth

of the Schuylkill, and the Abbé Morley tells me will cost five millions of livres. It is on piers.

Your old friend M. Terenet, the bridge architect, is yet living. I was introduced to him by M. Le Roy. He has taken a residence in the Elysian Fields for the purpose of being near the works. He has invited me to see his house at Paris, where all his drawings and models are. By the next packet, I will write to you respecting the opinion of the Academy on the model. I shall be obliged to Mr. Clymer to send me some Philadelphia and American news. Please to present me with much respect to your family, and to all my good friends around you. I am, dear Sir, your affectionate and obedient servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

FROM COUNT DE BUFFON TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

Au Jardin du Roi, 18 July, 1787.

MY DEAR SIR,

I always feel under great obligations to you, in finding that you sometimes think of me, and that, in the midst of your great occupations, you have been so thoughtful as to send me seeds and rare plants for the King's garden. I should be delighted to learn something of the progress of your Philosophical Society, of which you have been kind enough to elect me a member. I have just finished my *Histoire Naturelle de Minéraux*; and, if the Society does not possess this work, or if any volume is missing, I should be most happy to forward it to you.

Tell me also about your health, which is much better than mine. My pains are not very severe, but they

are almost without intermission. Your example, however, makes me hope, that they may all go off; for I understand, that since your return to America your health has been restored. I should like to hear so from yourself, and to learn if you have used any particular remedy. None of those, which I have taken thus far, has been of any avail, a mild treatment being absolutely the only one which I can bear. As your advice would certainly be useful to me, and I should have more confidence in you than in all the physicians, I should be glad to know from yourself what treatment or remedies you have found most beneficial. Accept the sentiments of strong and tender attachment, with which I shall ever remain, &c.

COUNT DE BUFFON.

P. S. I am now printing a treatise on the properties and use of the magnet, in which I show the close connexion of electricity with magnetism, and with the action of subterraneous fires in volcanoes. I shall have the honor to send it to you, as soon as it is out. My friend, M. Fanjas de Saint Fond, who has a great regard for you, desires me to present to you his respects.

FROM THE ABBÉ MORELLET TO B. FRANKLIN.

Reminiscences. — Commercial Regulations, as to Imposts and Taxation. — Affairs in France. — Madame Helvetius. — Paine's Model of an iron Bridge.

Translation.

Auteuil, 31 July, 1787.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I cannot express to you the pleasure your letters gave us, especially the details into which you have

gone respecting your health, and all that particularly concerns yourself. It is a delightful thought to us, and one on which we love to dwell, that, at the age to which you have attained, and after having pursued so honorable a career, you have found, in the bosom of your own country, all those enjoyments of which your age is susceptible. You know how much we desire their long continuance. Believe me, our happiness would be incomplete without this hope. I say this in the name of the whole *Academy* of Auteuil.

Since its productions have afforded you an hour's amusement, here are more of them, on which I shall be much pleased to have your opinion, and that of your friends. They are, moreover, in your own vein of pleasantry, and somewhat, I conceive, in that of Swift, with rather less of his dark misanthropy. At any rate, Dr. Jonathan and Dr. Benjamin are the models on whom I have fixed my eyes; and perhaps Nature herself has given me something of the turn of both in the art of speaking the truth in a jesting way, or without seeming to speak it. The difficulty is, that one cannot laugh outright at every thing which is truly laughable.

In the dedication of your College in the County of Lancaster, and the fine procession, and the religious ceremony, where were met together Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Lutherans, Catholics, Moravians, *e tutti quanti*, there was toleration in practice. I have translated the whole of the pamphlet which you sent me, and had it inserted in our *Mercury*. I think, indeed, that many readers will not perceive its scope, but it will not be thrown away upon every one. You see that I continue to diffuse, as far as is in my power, religious tolerance; but, for all this, I do not neglect the spirit of commercial liberality, and I fear, that the

latter makes too little progress among you. The duties on foreign merchandise, which you think necessary in your country, because you cannot levy direct taxes there, I consider as opposed to freedom of trade, when they are resorted to as sources of revenue; but I fear lest they should come to be looked upon among you, in the same light that they are throughout Europe, as a fine stroke of policy, intended to increase national commerce and wealth at the expense of foreign commerce and wealth, which is arrant folly.

I have reason to think, that you may follow our example on this point, since reading a pamphlet printed at Philadelphia, and, as the titlepage bears, read before the Society for *Political Inquiry*, at your house, yourself being present. In this, the author recommends duties and prohibitions to secure navigation from port to port in America; as if, with all her advantages in this line, she had any cause to fear the rivalry of foreign nations; as if she had not many more profitable modes of employing her capital and her men; as if the restraints upon her own commerce, and that of foreign nations, resulting from such legislation, would not cause her to lose more than she could expect to gain; as if she needed any other commercial regulations, than would naturally grow out of a good market for her staple commodities, her fisheries, and the like.

When you spoke to me of duties on imports, which you said you were obliged to impose, in order to defray the public expenses and for the payment of the national debt, and which you should repeal as soon as you could do without them and could levy a land-tax, although I did not approve such a practice, yet I looked upon it as honest, and perhaps necessary for a time. You impose duties that you may raise money; this is plain. But the author of

your pamphlet levies imposts to secure to America her navigation, and a balance of trade in her favor. He already follows in the steps of European governments, who have disguised all the tyranny they have exercised over commerce, under these false pretences; and I confess, I should be very sorry to see you pursuing the same crooked course.

You have learned from the common channels of news what great changes have taken place here. On this head there is too much to be said, to make it the subject of a letter. The most important events, and the acts of M. de Calonne, of the Assembly of Notables, and of the new administration, may all be found in great printed books, some copies of which will doubtless cross the Atlantic and reach your hands. If you take any interest in these things, they will afford you greater facilities of information respecting them, than a letter could do. The only thing I can tell you, which may be interesting to you, is, that our new Minister of Finance, the Archbishop of Toulouse, is a very well informed and intelligent man, well skilled in managing affairs and men, familiar with all sound principles, and having resolution to put them in practice. You must know, that entire freedom of trade finds a place among the maxims of his administration, and that he will subject it to no restriction, but such as he may be forced to lay upon it by circumstances, which he will always endeavour to remove and alter, as far as may be in his power. You are not ignorant, perhaps, that I can testify as to his way of thinking, since I have learned it in an acquaintance of nearly forty years, which still subsists.

Here is some hope for our country; but previous disorders, and other causes, which I shall not mention to you, may thwart or retard, more or less, the measures

of this new administration, and a crisis is at hand that may lay all our hopes in the dust. But no matter; I still hope, as you know, in the further progress of the human race; and I have taken it into my head to embody this sentiment in a little allegory, which I send you.

Our *Lady of Auteuil** enjoyed highly all the good news you communicated to us about yourself, and especially the letter you addressed to her. She will answer you, as will also the Abbé de la Roche. Her cats † have somewhat diminished in numbers, thanks to the bull-dog your grandson left with us. The trouole is, that no one will rid us of *Boulet*, which is the French name she has given him. Here he still is for our sins. His mistress places him at her side, on one of her fourteen *chaises-longues*, and he is the master of the house, we his humble servants obliged to open the door for him about forty or fifty times in an evening. But she received him from your grandson, and that is a good reason for us to bear patiently all the trouble he inflicts on us.

We are looking impatiently for news of the proceedings of your convention for uniting together the parties in your political State; a union, without which you can have neither perfect prosperity nor real tranquillity. The work ‡ of your excellent countryman, Mr. Jefferson, which I have translated, has been much liked here. It has been very well received, and I consider its principles very sound, and the facts well arranged. If any thing appears in your country, which you at all like, especially relating to subjects connected with com-

* Madame Helvétius.

† See *An Humble Petition presented to Madame Helvétius by her Cats*, Vol. II. p. 214.

‡ Notes on Virginia.

merce, or to your constitution, I shall be much obliged to you, if you will take advantage of some opportunity to send it to me.

Mr. Paine came to me in due time. He may have written you word, that I had restored to him his iron bridge, which our revenue officers had seized at Havre as contraband goods, or subject to duties; but it appeared on examination, that the custom-house had really neither prohibited nor taxed bridges, which have hitherto been built only in the very places where they were to be used. The custom-house officers had not foreseen, that it might one day happen, that a bridge should be constructed in Philadelphia or New York, to be thrown over the Seine at Paris. They are now aware of the fact, and will not forget this article in the new tariff. They must also enter houses on the list, if you acquire the habit of making them for Europeans.

Yesterday the Parliament of Paris, (urged for three weeks and more to record a stamp tax, with a new land tax, in order, by new financial resources, to cover the enormous deficit, which M. de Calonne had suffered to take place in our affairs,) moved and seemed to adhere to the following resolution; "That this Parliament has not the power nor right to accept and sanction new imposts; that this right pertains only to the States-General of the kingdom, which the King is besought to convoke immediately." What an important change you here see in the maxims of our sovereign courts, which have, at least for several ages, exercised and maintained the right, which they seem now to renounce. The most acute politicians can foresee but imperfectly to what this demand, and an Assembly of the States-General, should it take place, will lead. The event alone can enlighten us on this point. It may be seen by this fact, as well as by many others, that a

great change has taken place in the ideas, which nations have entertained of governments, and the relations between the governing and the governed parties. I must still believe, in accordance with my principles concerning the perfectibility of the human race, that every thing is for the best, to which we are ever tending, though we sometimes seem to recede from it.

We do not hear often enough from Mr. Franklin, your grandson. I wish to know how he likes Philadelphia, and whether he does us the honor to feel any regrets on our behalf; I mean, as respects our way of life; for, as regards ourselves individually, he would be very ungrateful not to do so, since he owes some remembrance to persons, who have known both his talents and his amiable character, and have appreciated them. I beg that he will rank me in this number, and accept my compliments. Monsieur and Madame Marmontel, and all my family, desire to be remembered to you, and charge me to express to you the pleasure they feel in the good news you gave us of your health and situation. I shall never forget the happiness I have enjoyed in knowing you, and seeing you intimately. I write to you from Auteuil, seated in your arm-chair, on which I have had engraved *Benjamin Franklin hîc sedebat*, and having by my side the little bureau, which you bequeathed to me at parting, with a drawer full of nails to gratify the love of nailing and hammering, which I possess in common with you. But, believe me, I have no need of all these helps to cherish your endeared *remembrance*, and to love you.

"Dum memor ipse mei, dum spiritus hos reget artus."

THE ABBÉ MORELLET.

FROM RICHARD PRICE TO B. FRANKLIN.

Society for abolishing the Slave Trade. — Spirit of Liberty beginning to prevail in Europe as a Consequence of the American War.

Hackney, 26 September, 1787

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I am very happy when I think of the encouragement which you have given me to address you under this appellation. Your *friendship* I reckon indeed one of the distinctions of my life. I frequently receive great pleasure from the accounts of you, which Dr. Rush and Mr. Vaughan send me. But I receive much greater pleasure from seeing your own hand.

I have lately been favored with two letters, which have given me this pleasure, the last of which acquaints me, that my name has been added to the number of the corresponding members of the Pennsylvania Society for Abolishing Negro Slavery, of which you are president, and also brought me a pamphlet containing the constitution and the laws of Pennsylvania, which relate to the object of the Society. I hope you and the Society will accept my thanks, and believe that I am truly sensible of the honor done me. As for any services I can do, they are indeed but small; for I find, that, far from possessing, in the decline of life, your vigor of body and mind, every kind of business is becoming more and more an incumbrance to me. At the same time, the calls of business increase upon me, as you will learn in some measure from the Report at the end of the Discourse, which you will receive with this letter.

A similar institution to yours, for abolishing negro slavery, is just formed in London, and I have been

desired to make one of the acting committee, but I have begged to be excused. I have sent you some of their papers. I need not say how earnestly I wish success to such institutions. Something, perhaps, will be done with this view by the convention of delegates.* This convention, consisting of many of the first men, in respect of wisdom and influence, in the United States, must be a most august and venerable assembly. May God guide their deliberations. The happiness of the world depends, in some degree, on the result. I am waiting with patience for an account of it.

In this part of the world there is a spirit rising, which must in time produce great effects. I refer principally to what is now passing in Holland, Brabant, and France. This spirit originated in America; and, should it appear, that it has there terminated in a state of society more favorable to peace, virtue, science, and liberty, and consequently to human happiness and dignity, than has ever yet been known, infinite good will be done. Indeed, a general fermentation seems to be taking place through Europe. In consequence of the attention created by the American war, and the dissemination of writings explaining the nature and end of civil government, the minds of men are becoming more enlightened; and the silly despots of the world are likely to be forced to respect human rights, and to take care not to govern too much, lest they should not govern at all.

You are acquainted with Mr. Paradise. He has sailed with his family for Virginia, where he is the proprietor of a good estate. His accomplishments as a

* Alluding to the convention for forming the Constitution of the United States.

scholar, and his excellent principles as a citizen, must make him useful there, and I hope also happy.*

During the course of last spring and summer, I frequently feared that my health was declining. In order to recover it, I have spent near two months in sea-bathing and dissipation at East Bourne in Sussex; and I hope that I have gained some recruit of spirits for another winter. Be so good as to deliver my kind respects to Mr. Vaughan, when you see him. I am much in his debt for two agreeable letters, and I hope soon to write to him. He is, I doubt not, useful where he is; but, as we have Mrs. Vaughan with us, we are in hopes he will not be long absent.

Last night the Gazette told us, that Turkey has declared war against Russia. It has also told us, that the King of Prussia, having entered Holland with his army and taken possession of Utrecht and many other towns, has reinstated the Stadtholder in all his honors and powers; but, at the same time, our preparations for war by pressing sailors, filling up regiments, and creating admirals, show that our ministers expect, that the French will interpose, and that they are determined to join the King of Prussia in supporting the Stadtholder against his constituents. With all the best wishes, I am most affectionately yours.

RICHARD PRICE.

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* This Mr. Paradise was the particular friend of Sir William Jones, and the same that visited Paris with him, as heretofore mentioned. See Vol. VIII. p. 366.

TO ALEXANDER SMALL.

American Taxation. — New Form of Prayer. — American Loyalists.

Philadelphia, 28 September, 1787.

Dear Sir,

I received your kind letter of June 6th, 1786, and I answered it, though long after the receipt. I do not perceive by your second favor of July, 1787, that my answer had then come to hand, but hope it may since that time.

I have not lost any of the principles of public economy you once knew me possessed of; but, to get the bad customs of a country changed, and new ones, though better, introduced, it is necessary first to remove the prejudices of the people, enlighten their ignorance, and convince them that their interest will be promoted by the proposed changes; and this is not the work of a day. Our legislators are all land-holders; and they are not yet persuaded, that all taxes are finally paid by the land. Besides, our country is so sparsely settled, the habitations, particularly in the back countries, being perhaps five or six miles distant from each other, that the time and labor of the collector in going from house to house, and being obliged to call often before he can recover the tax, amounts to more than the tax is worth, and therefore we have been forced into the mode of indirect taxes, that is, duties on importation of goods, and excises.

I have made no attempt to introduce the Form of Prayer here, which you and good Mrs. Baldwin do me the honor to approve. The things of *this* world take up too much of my time, of which indeed I have too little left, to undertake any thing like a reformation

in matters of religion. When we can sow good seed, we should however do it, and wait, when we can do no better, with patience nature's time, for their sprouting. Some lie many years in the ground, and at length certain favorable seasons or circumstances bring them forth with vigorous shoots and plentiful productions.

Had I been at home as you wish, soon after the peace, I might possibly have mitigated some of the severities against the royalists, believing, as I do, that fear and error, rather than malice, occasioned their desertion of their country's cause, and the adoption of the King's. The public resentment against them is now so far abated, that none who ask leave to return are refused, and many of them now live among us much at their ease. As to the restoration of confiscated estates, it is an operation that none of our politicians have as yet ventured to propose. They are a sort of people, that love to fortify themselves in their projects by precedent. Perhaps they wait to see your government restore the forfeited estates in Scotland to the Scotch, those in Ireland to the Irish, and those in England to the Welch.

I am glad that the distressed exiles, who remain with you, have received, or are likely to receive, some compensation for their losses, for I commiserate their situation. It was clearly incumbent on the King to indemnify those he had seduced by his proclamations; but it seems not so clearly consistent with the wisdom of Parliament to resolve doing it for him. If some mad King should think fit, in a freak, to make war upon his subjects of Scotland, or upon those of England, by the help of Scotland and Ireland, as the Stuarts did, may he not encourage followers by the precedent of these parliamentary gratuities, and thus set his subjects to cutting one another's throats, first with the

hope of sharing in confiscations, and then with that of compensation in case of disappointment? The council of brutes without a fable were aware of this. Lest that fable may perhaps not have fallen in your way, I enclose a copy of it.

Your commercial treaty with France seems to show a growing improvement in the sentiments of both nations in the economical science. All Europe might be a great deal happier with a little more understanding. We in America have lately had a convention for framing a new constitution. Enclosed I send you the result of their deliberations. Whether it will be generally acceptable and carried into execution is yet to be seen; but present appearances are in its favor.

I am always glad to hear from you, and of your welfare. I remember with pleasure the happy days we have spent together. Adieu, and believe me ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. Franklin.

TO MRS. JANE MECOM.

Philadelphia, 4 November, 1787

Dear Sister,

I received a kind letter from you lately, which gave me the pleasure of being informed that you were well. I am glad you have made the provision against the winter, which I mentioned to you. Your bill is honored. It is impossible for me always to guess what you may want, and I hope, therefore, that you will never be shy in letting me know wherein I can help to make your life more comfortable.*

* Among Dr. Franklin's papers I have found a large number of letters from his sister, extending through a period of nearly forty years. They are confined chiefly to family or private affairs, but they are uniformly

It was my intention to decline serving another year as President, that I might be at liberty to take a trip to Boston in the spring; but I submit to the unanimous voice of my country, which has again placed me in the chair. I have now been upwards of fifty years employed in public offices. When I informed your good friend Dr. Cooper, that I was ordered to France, being then seventy years old, and observed, that the public, having as it were eaten my flesh, seemed now resolved to pick my bones, he replied that he approved their taste, for that the nearer the bone the sweeter the meat. I must own, that it is no small pleasure to me, and I suppose it will give my sister pleasure, that, after such a long trial of me, I should be elected a third time by my fellow citizens, without a dissenting vote but my own, to fill the most honorable post in their power to bestow. This universal and unbounded con-

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marked with strong good sense, and the warmest attachment to her brother. She was left a widow in early life, with very small means of support; and she was unfortunate in the sickness and loss of some of her children, and the ill success of others. Her circumstances were made comfortable by the constant kindness and generous care of her brother, who regularly remitted to her money, and occasionally such other things as he knew she wanted. A part of the time she resided with a married daughter, but she had a home of her own in a house that belonged to Dr. Franklin in Boston. In her letters to her brother, she repeatedly expresses her gratitude for his watchfulness over her, and for his bounty. Soon after his return from France, she wrote; "I believe I did not tell you how thankfully I received your gift; but be assured my dear brother, that there is not a day passes in which my heart does not overflow with gratitude to you, and adoration to the Supreme Benefactor of all mankind, who puts it in your power, not only to make me as happy as humanity can expect to be, but enables you to diffuse your benefits so widely. I know it is your judgment, as well as practice, that kindness of heart should be expressed by deeds; but, in my opinion, words should not be excluded, (though I sometimes neglect them.) especially when there is no opportunity to perform deeds." Similar sentiments might be extracted from many of her letters. She was fond of reading, and frequently consulted her brother as to the most suitable books, which he took pains either to recommend or furnish.

fidence of a whole people flatters my vanity much more than a peerage could do.

"Hung o'er with ribands and stuck round with strings,"

may give nominal, but not real honors.

This family are all well, as I also am, thanks to God. We join in best wishes for you and yours. And I am ever, my dear sister, your affectionate brother,

B. Franklin.

TO COUNT DE BUFFON.

Philadelphia, 19 November, 1787.

Dear Sir,

I am honored by your letter, desiring to know by what means I am relieved in a disorder, with which you are also unfortunately afflicted. I have tried all the noted prescriptions for *diminishing* the stone without perceiving any good effect. But observing temperance in eating, avoiding wine and cider, and using daily the dumb bell, which exercises the upper part of the body without much moving the parts in contact with the stone, I think I have prevented its *increase*.

As the roughness of the stone lacerates a little the neck of the bladder, I find, that, when the urine happens to be sharp, I have much pain in making water and frequent urgencies. For relief under this circumstance, I take, going to bed, the bigness of a pigeon's egg of jelly of blackberries. The receipt for making it is enclosed. While I continue to do this every night, I am generally easy the day following, making water pretty freely, and with long intervals. I wish most sincerely that this simple remedy may have the same happy effect with you. Perhaps current jelly, or the jelly of apples or of raspberries, may be equally ser-

viceable; for I suspect the virtue of the jelly may lie principally in the boiled sugar, which is in some degree candied by the boiling of the jelly. Wishing you for your own sake much more ease, and for the sake of mankind many more years, I remain with the greatest esteem and respect, dear Sir, your most obedient and affectionate servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO ——.

Disorders in Holland. — Projected Conquest of Turkey.

Philadelphia, 15 December, 1787.

—— I hope the disorders in Brabant and Holland may be rectified without bloodshed. But I fear the impending war with the Turks, if not prevented by prudent negotiation, may in its consequences involve great part of Europe. I confide, however, that France and England will preserve their present peace with each other, notwithstanding some contrary appearances; for I think, that they have both of them *too much sense* to go to war without an important cause, as well as *too little money* at present.

As to the projected conquest of Turkey, I apprehend, that, if the Emperor and Empress would make some use of arithmetic, and calculate what annual revenues may be expected from the country they want, should they acquire it, and then offer the grand Signior a hundred times that annual revenue, to be paid down for an amicable purchase of it, it would be his interest to accept the offer, as well as theirs to make it, rather than a war for it should take place; since a war, to acquire that territory and to retain it, will cost both parties much more, perhaps ten times more, than such sum

of purchase money. But the hope of glory, and the ambition of princes, are not subject to arithmetical calculation. My best wishes attend you; being with great esteem, Sir, &c.

B. Franklin.

TO THE PRINTER OF THE EVENING HERALD.*

Justification of the State of Massachusetts, against certain Censures in the British Papers.

Sir,

The British newswriters are very assiduous in their endeavours to blacken America. Should we not be careful not to afford them any assistance by censures of one another, especially by censures not well founded?

I lately observed, in one of your papers, the conduct of the State of Massachusetts reflected on as being inconsistent and absurd, as well as wicked, for attempting to raise a tax by a Stamp Act, and for carrying on the Slave Trade.

The writer of those reflections might have considered, that their principal objection to the Stamp Tax was, its being imposed by a British Parliament, which had no right to tax them; for otherwise a tax by stamps is perhaps to be levied with as little inconvenience as any other that can be invented. Ireland has a Stamp Act of its own; but, should Britain pretend to impose such a tax on the Irish people, they would probably give a general opposition to it, and ought not for that to be charged with inconsistence.

One or two merchants in Boston, employing ships in the abominable African trade, may deservedly be

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* The date of this piece is uncertain.

condemned, though they do not bring their slaves home, but sell them in the West Indies. The State, as such, has never, that I have heard of, given encouragement to the diabolical commerce; and there have always been fewer slaves in the New England governments than in any other British colonies. National reflections are seldom just, and a whole people should not be decried for the crimes of a few individuals.

Your inserting this may make that brave people some amends, and will oblige one of your customers, who is

A PENNSYLVANIAN.

TO MATHER BYLES.*

Electrical Points and Electricity.

Philadelphia, 1 January, 1788.

DEAR OLD FRIEND,

I duly received your kind letter of May 14th. I was then busily engaged in attending our general Convention, which, added to the ordinary current business of this government, took up so much of my time, that I was obliged to postpone answering many letters of friends, which gave occasion of mislaying some of them, and among those was yours, only last week come again to hand. I think I never received what you mention, respecting the University of Aberdeen; but the good will I might show on that occasion was not of importance enough to deserve your repeating the acknowledgment. It was in me only paying a debt; for I remember with gratitude, that I owe one of my first academical honors to your recommendation.

It gives me much pleasure to understand, that my

* A clergyman of Boston. For some biographical anecdotes respecting him, see TUDOR'S *Life of James Otis*, pp. 155–160.

points have been of service in the protection of you and yours. I wish for your sake, that electricity had really proved what it was at first supposed to be, a cure for the palsy. It is, however, happy for you, that, when old age and that malady have concurred to enfeeble you, and to disable you for writing, you have a daughter at hand to nurse you with filial attention, and to be your secretary, of which I see she is very capable, by the elegance and correctness of her writing in the letter I am now answering. I too have a daughter, who lives with me and is the comfort of my declining years, while my son is estranged from me by the part he took in the late war, and keeps aloof, residing in England, whose cause he *espoused;* whereby the old proverb is exemplified;

> "My son is my son till he gets him a wife;
> But my daughter 's my daughter all the days of her life."

I remember you had a little collection of curiosities. Please to honor with a place in it the enclosed medal, which I got struck in Paris. The thought was much approved by the connoisseurs there, and the engraving vell executed. My best wishes attend you, being ever your affectionate friend and humble servant,

B. Franklin.

FROM ALEXANDER SMALL TO B. FRANKLIN.

Affairs in England. — American Tories.

2 January, 1788.

Dear Sir,

On the receipt of your most agreeable favor, I immediately informed the Baldwin family of your kind mention of them. I certainly never received the first letter you allude to, this being the only letter I have

been favored with by you since your return to your free country. People here think very differently of your freedom. In general we are of opinion, that your territory is too extensive for a popular government. Anarchy and despotism, they allege, must be the consequence. They therefore think it would be much wiser in you to adopt our limited government, as you have taken so many useful hints from us. You would naturally correct some errors, that have crept into our Constitution.

When you threw us off, I did expect, that we must have felt great diminution in our exports; but, what is singular, our people have been all constantly employed. We have some advantage over every nation in Europe. There is no nation in which the merchants have so great capitals, or are of so enterprising dispositions. We have fire and water everywhere, and ingenuity to turn them to the best advantage. We have the materials for great manufactories within ourselves; such as iron, steel, lead, copper, and tin. The whole island of Anglesea is found to be a mass of copper; and Mr. Wilkinson, who has the greatest foundery, I believe, in Europe, finds iron everywhere, and Mr. Wedgwood turns the clay, which does not turn to account with Mr. Wilkinson, into beautiful earthen ware. Did he make his exhibition of his very noble set sent to the Empress of Russia before you left England?

You see, that, so far as we can trace the descendants of attainted families, their honors are restored. The Irish Roman Catholic families are most of them either engrafted into foreign families, or are extinct. Those, whose lands were in the crown by modern forfeiture, have their estates restored to them. By a general act of grace, call back your banished people. Procure inhabitants, and they will in time, by their industry,

create wealth. I think your present want of circulating cash may prove an advantage, as it may give a check to the luxury you had imported from us.

France may, by and by, exhibit a new scene of policy in Europe. Wealth, poured in upon her during the war, promises to restrain the power of the crown; and the King, as a reward for the assistance he gave you in renouncing your brethren, may have his own wings clipped. You will probably most abundantly punish Spain; for I dare prophesy, that in less than a century, you will take possession of Mexico. Thus the world goes round.

That you may live to see a good government established in your country, and happily enjoy what of life remains to you, is the sincere prayer of your affectionate, &c. ALEXANDER SMALL.

TO JOHN INGENHOUSZ.

Wars in Europe. — Russia and Turkey. — Public Credit in the United States.

Philadelphia, 11 February, 1788.

MY DEAR OLD FRIEND,

Your letter of September 28th, 1787, came to my hands but about two weeks since. It found me very ill with a severe fit of the stone, which followed a fall I had on the stone steps that lead into my garden, whereby I was much bruised, and my wrist sprained, so as to render me incapable of writing for several weeks. I therefore requested Mr. Vaughan to answer it for me, which he has done in his letter, that I enclose. I will, however, add a little, as my hand is much strengthened, though I still write with pain.

All the books you have sent to me, and to the Philosophical Society here, have been received. They will be acknowledged in our next volume. In the mean time please to accept our hearty thanks. There are few books published in these times, that contain so much new and useful knowledge as these you have written.

I lament with you the prospect of a horrid war, which is likely to engage so great a part of mankind. There is little good gained, and so much mischief done generally, by wars, that I wish the imprudence of undertaking them was more evident to princes; in which case I think they would be less frequent. If I were counsellor of the Empress of Russia, and found that she desired to possess some part of the dominions of the Grand Signior, I should advise her to compute the annual taxes raised from that territory, and make him an offer of buying it, at the rate of paying for it at twenty years' purchase. And if I were his counsellor, I should advise him to take the money, and cede the dominion of that territory. For I am of opinion, that a war to obtain it will cost her more than that sum, and the event uncertain, and that the defence of it will cost him as much; and, not having embraced the offer, his loss is double. But to make and accept such an offer, these potentates should be both of them reasonable creatures, and free from the ambition of glory, which perhaps is too much to be supposed.

I am glad that peace is likely to be established in your native country, with so little expense of blood, though it be done in a manner not agreeable to a great part of the nation. If the French had entered with the Prussians, and made it the seat of war, the mischief would have been infinite.

I am truly sorry for the losses you have met with in your attempts to make profit by commerce in this country. Jonathan Williams was in England and Ireland many months before I left France. He has since been in different parts of America, collecting his debts, and now happens to be here. I have talked with him about your affairs. He tells me, that your adventure to Carolina sold well, and that the produce was returned in indigo, which, if it had arrived, would have rendered good profit; and, though his correspondent had taken the prudent precaution to insure in Charleston, the place being taken soon after, and the insurers ruined, nothing of value could be recovered, and that he is a loser of a hundred guineas by the share he took in that unfortunate adventure. I was mistaken when I informed you, that his brother had given him your certificates. It was only authenticated copies of them. These he has now given me. But I have written to John to give the originals to Mr. Charles Vaughan, now in Boston, and to settle your account with that gentleman, paying to him any bills that may be in hand, which I make no doubt he will do.

Such certificates are low in value at present, but we hope and believe they will succeed, when our new projected constitution of government is established. I lent to the old Congress three thousand pounds in the value of hard money, and took their certificates promising interest at six per cent, but I have received no interest for several years, and if I were now to sell the principal, I could not get more than a sixth part. You must not ascribe this to want of honesty in our government, but to want of ability; the war having exhausted all the faculties of the country. The public funds even of Great Britain sunk by the war the three per cents from ninety-five to fifty-four. We had powerful ar-

mies of enemies in our country, ravaging, plundering, and destroying our towns, and obstructing our agriculture, while their fleets ruined our commerce; and this for eight years together. I question, whether the public credit, even of your rich country, would have supported itself under similar treatment. But we are recovering fast, and, if peace continues, which God grant, we shall soon be in flourishing circumstances.

I did not think I could have written so much. I have done it, however, a little at a time. I can now only add, that I remain, with unalterable esteem and affection, my dear friend, yours most sincerely,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO M. LE VEILLARD.

Dr. Franklin's Memoirs of his own Life. — New Constitution of the United States. — Restrictions on Trade. — Paper Money.

Philadelphia, 17 February, 1788.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I received your kind letter of June 23d, by Mr. Saugrain, and it is the last of yours that is come to my hands. As you have so much leisure, and love writing, I cannot think you have been so long silent; you, who are so good as to love me, and who know how much pleasure your letters always afford me. I therefore rather suspect you may probably have written something too freely concerning public affairs, and that your letters may be arrested in your postoffice, and yourself lodged in the Bastille. You see I imagine any thing, however extravagant, rather than suppose, as your letters too often do, that my friends forget me.

I find Mr. Saugrain to answer well the good character you give of him, and shall with pleasure render

him any services in my power. He is now gone down the Ohio, to reconnoitre that country.

I should have proceeded in the history you mention,* if I could well have avoided accepting the chair of President for this third and last year; to which I was again elected by the *unanimous* voice of the Council and General Assembly in November. If I live to see this year expire, I may enjoy some leisure, which I promise you to employ in the work you do me the honor to urge so earnestly.

I sent you with my last a copy of the new Constitution proposed for the United States by the late General Convention. I sent one also to our excellent friend the Duke de la Rochefoucauld. I attended the business of the Convention faithfully for four months. Enclosed you have the last speech I made in it.† Six States have already adopted the Constitution, and there is now little doubt of its being accepted by a sufficient number to carry it into execution, if not immediately by the whole. It has, however, met with great opposition in some States, for we are at present a nation of politicians. And, though there is a general dread of giving too much power to our *governors*, I think we are more in danger from too little obedience in the *governed*.

We shall, as you suppose, have imposts on trade, and custom-houses, not because other nations have them, but because we cannot at present do without them. We want to discharge our public debt occasioned by the late war. Direct taxes are not so easily levied on the scantily settled inhabitants of our wide-extended country; and what is paid in the price of

* The Memoirs of his own Life, to the continuance of which all his friends, who knew the importance of such a history, wished him anxiously to apply. — W. T. F.

† See Vol. V. p. 155.

merchandise is less felt by the consumer, and less the cause of complaint. When we are out of debt we may leave our trade free, for our ordinary charges of government will not be great.

Where there is a free government, and the people make their own laws by their representatives, I see no injustice in their obliging one another to take their own paper money. It is no more so than compelling a man by law to take his own note. But it is unjust to pay strangers with such money against their will. The making of paper money with such a sanction is however a folly, since, although you may by law oblige a citizen to take it for his goods, you cannot fix his prices; and his liberty of rating them as he pleases, which is the same thing as setting what value he pleases on your money, defeats your sanction.

I have been concerned to hear of the troubles in the internal government of the country I love;* and hope some good may come out of them; and that they may end without mischief.

In your letter to my grandson, you asked some questions that had an appearance as if you meditated a visit to us. Nothing in this world would give me greater pleasure, than to receive and embrace here the whole family; but it is too great a happiness to be expected. This family all join with me in best wishes of every felicity to you and yours; and I remain with unalterable and great esteem and affection, my dear friend, yours most sincerely,

B. FRANKLIN

* France.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE PENNSYLVANIA GAZETTE.

On the Abuse of the Press.

MESSRS. HALL AND SELLERS,

I lately heard a remark, that on examination of the *Pennsylvania Gazette* for fifty years, from its commencement, it appeared, that, during that long period, scarce one libellous piece had ever appeared in it. This generally chaste conduct of your paper is much to its reputation; for it has long been the opinion of sober, judicious people, that nothing is more likely to endanger the liberty of the press, than the abuse of that liberty, by employing it in personal accusation, detraction, and calumny. The excesses some of our papers have been guilty of in this particular, have set this State in a bad light abroad, as appears by the following letter, which I wish you to publish, not merely to show your own disapprobation of the practice, but as a caution to others of the profession throughout the United States. For I have seen a European newspaper, in which the editor, who had been charged with frequently calumniating the Americans, justifies himself by saying, "that he had published nothing disgraceful to us, which he had not taken from our own printed papers." I am, &c. A. B.

"New York, March 30, 1788.

"DEAR FRIEND,

"My gout has again left me, after five months' painful confinement. It afforded me, however, the leisure to read, or hear read, all the packets of your newspapers, which you so kindly sent for my amusement.

"Mrs. W. has partaken of it; she likes to read the advertisements; but she remarks some kind of incon-

sistency in the announcing so many diversions for almost every evening of the week, and such quantities to be sold of expensive superfluities, fineries, and luxuries *just imported*, in a country, that at the same time fills its papers with complaints of *hard times*, and want of money. I tell her, that such complaints are common to all times and all countries, and were made even in Solomon's time; when, as we are told, silver was as plenty in Jerusalem as the stones in the street; and yet, even then, there were people that grumbled, so as to incur this censure from that knowing prince. '*Say not thou that the former times were better than these; for thou dost not inquire rightly concerning that matter.*'

"But the inconsistency that strikes me the most is, that between the name of your city, Philadelphia, (*brotherly love*,) and the spirit of rancor, malice, and *hatred* that breathes in its newspapers. For I learn from those papers, that your State is divided into parties, that each party ascribes all the public operations of the other to vicious motives; that they do not even suspect one another of the smallest degree of honesty; that the antifederalists are such, merely from the fear of losing power, places, or emoluments, which they have in possession or in expectation; that the federalists are a set of *conspirators*, who aim at establishing a tyranny over the persons and property of their countrymen, and to live in splendor on the plunder of the people. I learn, too, that your justices of the peace, though chosen by their neighbours, make a villanous trade of their office, and promote discord to augment fees, and fleece their electors; and that this would not be mended by placing the choice in the executive council, who, with interested or party views, are continually making as improper appointments; witness a '*petty fiddler, sycophant, and scoundrel,*' appointed Judge of the Admi-

ralty; '*an old woman and fomenter of sedition*' to be another of the Judges, and '*a Jeffries*' Chief Justice, &c. &c.; with '*two harpies*' the Comptroller and Naval Officers, to prey upon the merchants and deprive them of their property by force of arms, &c.

"I am informed also by these papers, that your General Assembly, though the annual choice of the people, shows no regard to their rights, but from sinister views or ignorance makes laws in direct violation of the constitution, to divest the inhabitants of their property and give it to strangers and intruders; and that the Council, either fearing the resentment of their constituents, or plotting to enslave them, had projected to disarm them, and given orders for that purpose; and finally, that your President, the unanimous joint choice of the Council and Assembly, is '*an old rogue*,' who gave his assent to the federal constitution merely to avoid refunding money he had purloined from the United States.

"There is, indeed, a good deal of manifest *inconsistency* in all this, and yet a stranger, seeing it in your own prints, though he does not believe it all, may probably believe enough of it to conclude, that Pennsylvania is peopled by a set of the most unprincipled, wicked, rascally, and quarrelsome scoundrels upon the face of the globe. I have sometimes, indeed, suspected, that those papers are the manufacture of foreign enemies among you, who write with a view of disgracing your country, and making you appear contemptible and detestable all the world over; but then I wonder at the indiscretion of your printers in publishing such writings! There is, however, one of your *inconsistencies* that consoles me a little, which is, that though, *living*, you give one another the characters of devils; *dead*, you are all angels! It is delightful, when any of you

die, to read what good husbands, good fathers, good friends, good citizens, and good Christians you were, concluding with a scrap of poetry that places you, with certainty, every one in heaven. So that I think Pennsylvania a good country *to die in*, though a very bad one to live in."

FROM THOMAS POWNALL TO B. FRANKLIN

Political Condition of the Swiss Cantons. — Constitution of the United States.

Bristol, 8 April, 1788.

My dear old Friend,

It is with more than common pleasure, that I sit down this day to write to you once more. As I have read my own death more than once in our newspapers, so I have read, and also heard, that you had quitted this present stage, and were gone where Lycurgus, Solon, Numa, and the elder Brutus have been long gone before you; and where I most decidedly believe, that you and others, who have served and have endeavoured to serve their country and the community of mankind at large, will compare notes with them. Although I considered your last quitting of Europe, as a departure like that of death, at least to us whom you left behind, yet, so long as you remained upon the same globe, in the same system of life, and since, as the proverb says, *while there 's life, there 's hope*, one might indulge a fond hope that we should meet again. But, when I was told you were dead, I was struck with a damp upon my heart, not for you, but for myself, as having lost the last friend remaining, with whom I could communicate on some points of the utmost importance to the liberty of man.

I believe that I am the only one now left, on this stage of life, of those commissioners representing and acting for the several provinces in America, whom I met at that Congress in Albany, in 1754, when the events, which have since come into fact, first began to develope themselves, as ready to burst into bloom and to bring forth the fruits of liberty, which you in America at present enjoy. How long I am to continue after these, is of very little consequence either to myself or to the world, as I now stand unconnected with it and its affairs.

In your last letter from Paris, when you took leave of me, then at Geneva, you desired I would consider the operations and effect of the Helvetic League, with a reference to the political union of the American States. I did so, and every thing, which I saw or had occasion to learn about this league, only served to confirm what I had already written and published in my "Memorial addressed to the Sovereigns of America." I saw, that, if there was not in a people such a confidence in the basis of their liberty, as could suffer without fears and jealousies a spirit of sovereignty to establish a regulated rotary system of government, trusted, as to men in rotation, with every power necessary to render it effective, there could be neither the true spirit of liberty nor the fruits of government, and that either an aristocracy, or a monarchy, founded in faction or violence, must take place of it. I saw the traces of the politics of some high allies, false friends of the Swiss, establishing an aristocracy, whose members were their pensioners. I deprecated from my soul, that this might ever be the fate of America. And since you carried up from the committee of the Convention your report of a system of sovereignty founded in law, and above which law only was sovereign, I begin to

entertain hopes for the liberties of America, and for what will be an asylum one day or other to a remnant of mankind, who wish and deserve to live with political liberty.

I do not altogether take confidence to heart. I have some fears of mischief from the *orbit of four years' period*, which you give to the rotation of the office of President. It may become the ground of intrigue. Further, suppose the United States in peace, and that they have a president exactly and fully qualified to conduct their affairs in peace, but not in war. Suppose then war to come upon you, before the period of his office has had its rotation. Although the United States might wish to choose a president, suited to conduct matters in the line of war or of negotiation, that, unless a voluntary resignation of the first takes place, cannot be done. I make this remark from my knowledge on experience, that the people, in their *annual election* of representatives in General Assembly, look always thus to suit the character of their representative to the business of the country, which is likely to come into operation. When I see how wisely and prudently suited to the basis whereon it is built, every other part of your system is framed, I suspect my own judgment in this, and suppose there must be something, which I do not see, that operated to this form of a four years' rotation. As I hope and trust you are now alive and well, and will be so to receive what I now write, and as I also hope you will give me an answer, and that I shall continue in life to receive it, pray explain this to me.

Being at this place to spend a few weeks, and sending to Mrs. Cruger to inquire whether any ship, by which I could write to you, was going to America, and hearing that a ship bound to New York is just gone

down the river, and that she sends her letters to-morrow morning, I have hardly an hour to write this hasty letter to you. I am, as I ever have been, most sincerely your affectionate friend,

THOMAS POWNALL.

TO M. LE VEILLARD.

New Constitution. — Custom-House Duties.

Philadelphia, 22 April, 1788.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I received but a few days since, your favor of November 30th, 1787, in which you continue to urge me to finish the Memoirs. My three years of service will expire in October, when a new president must be chosen; and I had the project of retiring then to my grandson's estate in New Jersey, where I might be free from the interruption of visits, in order to complete that work for your satisfaction; for in this city my time is so cut to pieces by friends and strangers, that I have sometimes envied the prisoners in Bastille. But considering now the little remnant of life I have left, the accidents that may happen between this and October, and your earnest desire, I have come to the resolution to proceed in that work to-morrow, and continue it daily till finished, which, if my health permits, may be in the course of the ensuing summer. As it goes on, I will have a copy made for you, and you may expect to receive a part by the next packet.

It is very possible, as you suppose, that all the articles of the proposed new government will not remain unchanged, after the first meeting of the Congress. I am of opinion with you, that the *two* chambers were not necessary, and I disliked some other articles that are

in, and wished for some that are not in the proposed plan. I nevertheless hope it may be adopted, though I should have nothing to do with the execution of it, being determined to quit all public business with my present employment. At eighty-three one certainly has a right to *ambition* repose.

We are not ignorant, that the duties paid at the custom-house on the importation of foreign goods are finally reimbursed by the consumer, but we impose them as the easiest way of levying a tax from those consumers. If our new country was as closely inhabited as your old one, we might without much difficulty collect a land tax, that would be sufficient for all purposes; but where farms are at five or six miles' distance from each other, as they are in a great part of our country, the going of the collectors from house to house to demand the taxes, and being obliged to call more than once for the same tax, makes the trouble of collecting in many cases exceed the value of the sum collected. Things that are practicable in one country are not always so in another, where circumstances differ. Our duties are, however, generally so small, as to give little temptation to smuggling. Believe me ever my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO JOHN LATHROP.*

Attachment to his early Friends and the Associations of his Youth. — Growing Felicity of Mankind by Improvements in Philosophy.

Philadelphia, 31 May, 1788.

Reverend Sir,

I received your obliging favor of the 6th instant by Mr. Hilliard, with whose conversation I was much pleased, and would have been glad to have had more of it, if he would have spared it to me; but the short time of his stay has prevented. You need make no apology for introducing any of your friends to me. I consider it as doing me honor, as well as giving me pleasure.

I thank you for the pamphlet of the Humane Society. In return please to accept one of the same kind, which was published while I resided in France. If your Society have not hitherto seen it, it may possibly afford them useful hints.

It would certainly, as you observe, be a very great pleasure to me, if I could once again visit my native town, and walk over the grounds I used to frequent when a boy, and where I enjoyed many of the innocent pleasures of youth, which would be so brought to my remembrance, and where I might find some of my old acquaintance to converse with. But when I consider how well I am situated here, with every thing about me, that I can call either necessary or convenient; the fatigues and bad accommodations to be met with and suffered in a land journey, and the unpleas-

* An eminent clergyman of Boston, and for many years a neighbour and valuable friend of Mrs. Mecom, the sister of Dr. Franklin.

antness of sea voyages, to one, who, although he has crossed the Atlantic eight times, and made many smaller trips, does not recollect his having ever been at sea without taking a firm resolution never to go to sea again; and that, if I were arrived in Boston, I should see but little of it, as I could neither bear walking nor riding in a carriage over its pebbled streets; and, above all, that I should find very few indeed of my old friends living, it being now sixty-five years since I left it to settle here; — all this considered, I say, it seems probable, though not certain, that I shall hardly again visit that beloved place. But I enjoy the company and conversation of its inhabitants, when any of them are so good as to visit me; for, besides their general good sense, which I value, the Boston manner, turn of phrase, and even tone of voice, and accent in pronunciation, all please, and seem to refresh and revive me.

I have been long impressed with the same sentiments you so well express, of the growing felicity of mankind, from the improvements in philosophy, morals, politics, and even the conveniences of common living, and the invention and acquisition of new and useful utensils and instruments; so that I have sometimes almost wished it had been my destiny to be born two or three centuries hence. For invention and improvement are prolific, and beget more of their kind. The present progress is rapid. Many of great importance, now unthought of, will before that period be produced; and then I might not only enjoy their advantages, but have my curiosity gratified in knowing what they are to be. I see a little absurdity in what I have just written, but it is to a friend, who will wink and let it pass, while I mention one reason more for such a wish, which is, that, if the art of physic shall

be improved in proportion to other arts, we may then be able to avoid diseases, and live as long as the patriarchs in Genesis; to which I suppose we should have little objection.

I am glad my dear sister has so good and kind a neighbour. I sometimes suspect she may be backward in acquainting me with circumstances in which I might be more useful to her. If any such should occur to your observation, your mentioning them to me will be a favor I shall be thankful for. With great esteem, I have the honor to be, Reverend Sir, &c.

B. Franklin.

TO M. LE VEILLARD.

Toleration. — Constitution of the United States.

Philadelphia, 8 June, 1788.

My dear Friend,

I received a few days ago your kind letter of the 3d of January. The *arrêt* in favor of the *non-catholiques* gives pleasure here, not only from its present advantages, but as it is a good step towards general toleration, and to the abolishing in time all party spirit among Christians, and the mischiefs that have so long attended it. Thank God, the world is growing wiser and wiser; and as by degrees men are convinced of the folly of wars for religion, for dominion, or for commerce, they will be happier and happier.

Eight States have now agreed to the proposed new constitution; there remain five who have not yet discussed it; their appointed times of meeting not being yet arrived. Two are to meet this month, the rest later. One more agreeing, it will be carried into execution. Probably some will not agree at present, but

time may bring them in; so that we have little doubt of its becoming general, perhaps with some corrections. As to your friend's taking a share in the management of it, his age and infirmities render him unfit for the business, as the business would be for him. After the expiration of his presidentship, which will now be in a few months, he is *determined* to engage no more in public affairs, even if required; but his countrymen will be too reasonable to require it. You are not so considerate; you are a hard task-master. You insist on his writing *his life*, already a long work, and at the same time would have him continually employed in augmenting the subject, while the time shortens in which the work is to be executed. General Washington is the man that all our eyes are fixed on for *President*, and what little influence I may have, is devoted to him. I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO M. DUPONT DE NEMOURS.

Constitution of the United States. — Principles of Trade. — Commercial Dictionary.

Philadelphia, 9 June, 1788.

SIR,

I have received your favor of December 31st, with the extract of a letter, which you wish to have translated and published here. But seven States having, before it arrived, ratified the new constitution, and others being daily expected to do the same, after the fullest discussion in convention, and in all the public papers, till everybody was tired of the argument, it seemed too late to propose delay, and especially the delay that must be occasioned by a revision and cor-

rection of all the separate Constitutions. For it would take at least a year to convince thirteen States, that the Constitutions they have practised ever since the Revolution, without observing any imperfections in them so great as to be worth the trouble of amendment, are nevertheless so ill formed as to be unfit for continuation, or to be parts of a federal government. And, when they should be so convinced, it would probably take some years more to make the corrections.

An eighth State has since acceded, and when a ninth is added, which is now daily expected, the constitution will be carried into execution. It is probable, however, that, at the first meeting of the new Congress, various amendments will be proposed and discussed, when I hope your *Ouvrage sur les Principes et le Bien des Républiques en général*, &c. &c., may be ready to put into their hands; and such a work from your hand I am confident, though it may not be entirely followed, will afford useful hints, and produce advantages of importance.

But we must not expect, that a new government may be formed, as a game of chess may be played, by a skilful hand, without a fault. The players of our game are so many, their ideas so different, their prejudices so strong and so various, and their particular interests, independent of the general, seeming so opposite, that not a move can be made that is not contested; the numerous objections confound the understanding; the wisest must agree to some unreasonable things, that reasonable ones of more consequence may be obtained; and thus chance has its share in many of the determinations, so that the play is more like *tric-trac* with a box of dice.

We are much pleased with the disposition of your government to favor our commerce, manifested in the

late *réglement*. You appear to be possessed of a *truth*, which few governments are possessed of, that A must take some of B's produce, otherwise B will not be able to pay for what he would take of A. But there is one thing wanting to facilitate and augment our intercourse. It is a dictionary, explaining the names of different articles of manufacture in the two languages. When I was in Paris, I received a large order for a great variety of goods, particularly of the kind called hard wares, that is, wares of iron and steel; and when I showed the invoice to your manufacturers, they did not understand what kind of goods or instruments were meant by the names; nor could any English and French dictionary be found to explain them. So I sent to England for one of each sort, which might serve both as explanation and as a model, the latter being of importance likewise, since people are prejudiced in favor of *forms* they have been used to, though perhaps not the best. They cost me twenty-five guineas, but were lost by the way, and, the peace coming on, the scheme dropped. It would, however, as I imagine, be well worth reviving, for our merchants say, we still send to England for such goods as we want, because there they understand our orders, and can execute them precisely. With great and sincere esteem, I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM M. DE CONDORCET TO B. FRANKLIN.

Constitution of the United States. — Affairs in France.

Translation.

Paris, 8 July, 1788.

My dear Friend,

I beg you to assure the Philosophical Society of Philadelphia of my gratitude for the honor, which it has done me in electing me a member, and to present at the same time my thanks for the volume it has been kind enough to send me.

I have seen your new federal constitution, and the speech pronounced by you on that occasion. If it was necessary to finish it at once, if it was impossible to obtain any thing better, we must regard it as among the necessary evils, and hope that the opposition will be strong enough to require a few years hence a new convention. I see with pain, that the aristocratic spirit seeks to introduce itself among you, in spite of so many wise precautions. At this moment it is throwing every thing into confusion here. Priests, magistrates, nobles, all unite against the poor citizens, who are of a very different character. This league, so numerous in itself, has increased its strength by clamors against despotism. It is true, that it has taken the very moment when the King is acknowledging the rights of the nation, and promising to restore them; but the word is a hateful one, and in this country words are more than things.

I hope, however, that we shall get through, and that we shall have neither civil war nor bankruptcy, in spite of all that our pretended patriots are saying and doing to lead us to both. Adieu, my dear friend; may you long enjoy your glory, but let it not make you forget

the friends and the admirers, whom you have left on the other side of the ocean. I am, &c.

CONDORCET.

FROM THE DUKE DE LA ROCHEFOUCAULD TO B. FRANKLIN.

Constitution of the United States. — Washington. — Political Condition of France.

Translation.

Varennes, 12 July, 1788.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have heard from you indirectly, through M. le Veillard and the Abbé de la Roche, more recently than by the letter, which you were kind enough to write to me some time since. I learn from the former gentleman, that we may soon expect the Memoirs of your life, which you promised him so long ago. What a precious monument this memoir must be, written as it is by a true philosopher, whose genius has thrown light upon physical and political science, has taught us what lightning is, and how we may avoid it; what liberty is, and how we may acquire and preserve it; and who, uniting to rich intellectual gifts the kindest social feelings, has shown, that he knows the value of friendship, and how compatible it is with sentiments of respect and veneration; a philosopher, too, who can judge himself with the same impartiality, with which he would judge others. It will be a gift most dear to your friends, who will always pray, that the last chapter of a life so valuable to humanity may have the longest possible extent.

We see with pleasure, that your infirmities, though they do not leave you, still do not increase; and since

they have allowed you for the last three years to labor in public affairs, we hope that they will now allow you to enjoy for a long period the repose and tranquillity, which should close so great a career.

Eight States, then, have accepted the new federal constitution. Virginia is to be the ninth, so that it will presently go into operation, with a few modifications made upon the original plan adopted by the convention. There is one point, on which I have heard no objections, which yet seems to me liable to a great many. I mean the extent of the power granted to the President, and the possibility of his occupying the place for an indefinite period. I love to believe that Washington, your worthy companion in the great American revolution, will give to the world the example of a man, who has willingly set bounds to his own power; that, when placed by his fellow citizens in the highest office, he will point out to them the evils of too blind a confidence, and, directing it to a noble end, he will provide proper restraints upon his own power, and that of his successors less worthy than himself.

While you are busy in these great matters, France, whom you left talking zealously of liberty for other nations, begins to think, that a small portion of this same liberty would be a very good thing for herself. Good works for the last thirty years, and your good example for the last fourteen, have enlightened us much; while our ministers, sometimes despotic, and sometimes rapacious, have, by their attacks upon personal liberty or property, led men to the examination of great principles; an ignorance of which, sometimes real and sometimes conventional, left us in a state of calm, which was by no means happiness, though frivolous, unenlightened, and stupid people, who are the largest class, thought it was.

The excess of the evil awakened us at last. M. de Calonne made known the disastrous state of the finances; his successors employed violent means; the classes, which had been the zealous supporters of the royal authority, and often the passive or the ready instruments of ministerial despotism, for which, when they opposed it, they only substituted their own, which was still worse, these classes found their only means of resistance consisted in calling public opinion to their aid. They have made an appeal to the nation, and the States-General are demanded with one voice from one extremity of France to the other. The ministers, instead of skilfully yielding to this call, have shown a repugnance, and defer announcing their convocation, pretending that it is difficult to settle the forms, and that, before the assembly can be called, time should be given for the public mind to grow calm. This last reason is altogether futile; for the more repugnance they show, and the stronger their desire to avoid granting the general wish, the more it is to be feared that the exasperation will increase.

The first reason, however, is not without foundation. It is true, that the form of our States-General, which has undergone several variations, is very nearly determined by the different meetings, which have taken place from 1483 to 1624; but their constitution is a bad one. The distinction into three orders, of which the first, the *clergy*, ought not to be one; of which the second, the *nobility*, is a constitutional evil, and enjoys, with the first, privileges which are burdensome to the nation; of which the third, the *Third Estate*, which ought to be the only one, and should comprehend all holders of property, is still in a great measure composed of privileged persons; I repeat, this distinction into three orders is a great obstacle to the public

good, by the diversity of interests, which may render this assembly a system of three bodies inimical to each other, and no one of them truly friends to the nation.

If our well intentioned ministers had taken up the idea of convoking a National Assembly, they might have reformed this evil, and given us a form of representation founded upon principles of justice and good policy; but now that they call it in spite of themselves, they cannot help following the old form; and it is from an assembly, the composition of which is so exceptionable, that we are to expect a constitution. The light, which has lately been shed upon the science of political economy, is our only ground of hope and consolation; and perhaps it will be sufficient to triumph over ministers, orders, and political bodies, over their passions and their prejudices. Posterity must judge of this; but I much fear, that our first steps in the career of liberty will not be guided by that sound reason, which alone can lead us promptly and permanently to happiness.

You Americans were in a far more favorable position for the establishment of a good constitution. You had none of those distinctions of birth and place, with which superstition and the feudal system have cursed old Europe. It was partly to avoid the evil influence of these prejudices, that your forefathers left their country, and sought a retreat in the forests of America, which they soon converted into fertile fields. They had imbibed, with the milk of their British mothers, the love and the principles of liberty, which, sometimes forgotten by that nation, have never been extinct among them; and these principles and this love had taken deep root in the hearts of your countrymen. When the ministers and Parliament of England attempted to enslave you, they were resisted with an energy which

they had never expected; and, when you had acquired a *rank among nations*, you took, for the basis of your government and of your laws, personal liberty, liberty of property and consequently of trade, and religious liberty. You allowed men to enjoy all the rights, which they hold from nature, and of which everywhere else either legislators or circumstances have more or less deprived them.

But the pleasure of conversing with you has carried me beyond the proper limits of a letter. If I did not know your indulgence, I should ask your pardon; but your friendship and the interest of the subject make me feel this to be unnecessary. Give your distant blessing to a nation, which, at least, has the merit of appreciating your worth, and which, by the enlightened men it has produced, is worthy that you should take an interest in its fate, though it has often been the last to profit by the lessons, which it has given to others.

I shall close my letter by offering you, on the part of the author and on mine, a Dissertation on *Nyctalopia*, a disease endemic in the neighbourhood of La Rocheguyon. You will find there the names of M. de Condorcet and the Abbé Rochon, who desire to add their affectionate compliments to those of all my family. Remember me to yours, and ever believe in the constant regard and affection of the

DUKE DE LA ROCHEFOUCAULD.

FROM CHARLOTTE FILANGIERI TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

Naples, 27 September, 1788.

SIR,

Attribute this long delay to my grief, and sympathize with me in my affliction. The Chevalier Gaetano Filangieri, my husband and my friend, is no more. He died on the 21st of July, in the flower of his age, the victim of a cruel disease, and with him my happiness has gone. He has left three children, with no other patrimony than the memory of his virtues and his reputation. If the letter, which you wrote to him on the 14th of October, 1787, had reached him before the 1st of July, the day on which the disease attacked him, he would not have failed to answer it, and to send you the copies of his work on legislation, which you had requested. I shall myself perform what would have been his wish, and you will receive through the channel, which you pointed out to him, all that you desire. The little that remains of his immortal work will shortly be printed, and I shall deem it a duty to send it to you as soon as it comes from the press. I shall also have the melancholy pleasure of sending you, at the same time, the history of his life, and a selection from the best of his writings.

Accept, Sir, the assurance of the high consideration, and the sincere respect so fully your due, with which I have the honor to be, &c.

CHARLOTTE FILANGIERI.*

* Filangieri died at the age of thirty-six. His great work was left unfinished, but the deficiency has been in some degree supplied by Benjamin Constant, who added to the Paris edition of 1822 a volume, entitled *Commentaire sur l'Ouvrage de Filangieri.*

TO THE DUKE DE LA ROCHEFOUCAULD.

Philadelphia, 22 October, 1788.

—— Our public affairs begin to wear a more quiet aspect. The disputes about the faults of the new constitution are subsided. The first Congress will probably mend the principal ones, and future Congresses the rest. That which you mentioned did not pass unnoticed in the Convention. Many, if I remember right, were for making the President incapable of being chosen after the first four years; but the majority were for leaving the electors free to choose whom they pleased; and it was alleged, that such incapacity might tend to make the President less attentive to the duties of his office, and to the interests of the people, than he would be if a second choice depended on their good opinion of him. We are *making experiments* in politics; what knowledge we shall gain by them will be more certain, though perhaps we may hazard too much in *that* mode of acquiring it. ——

Having now finished my turn of being President, and promising myself to engage no more in public business, I hope to enjoy the small remains of life that are allowed me, in the repose I have so long wished for. I purpose to employ it in completing the personal history you mention.* It is now brought down to my fiftieth year. What is to follow will be of more important transactions; but it seems to me what is done will be of more general use to young readers, exemplifying strongly the effects of *prudent* and *imprudent conduct* in the commencement of a life of business.†

B. FRANKLIN.

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* The Memoirs of his Life.

† Two days later he wrote to M. le Veillard as follows. "Our affairs mend daily, and are getting into good order very fast. Never was any

TO MADAME LAVOISIER.

Philadelphia, 23 October, 1788.

I have a long time been disabled from writing to my dear friend, by a severe fit of the gout, or I should sooner have returned my thanks for her very kind present of the portrait, which she has herself done me the honor to make of me. It is allowed by those, who have seen it, to have great merit as a picture in every respect; but what particularly endears it to me is the hand that drew it. Our English enemies, when they were in possession of this city and my house, made a prisoner of my portrait, and carried it off with them, leaving that of its companion, my wife, by itself, a kind of widow. You have replaced the husband, and the lady seems to smile as well pleased.

It is true, as you observe, that I enjoy here every thing that a reasonable mind can desire, a sufficiency of income, a comfortable habitation of my own building, having all the conveniences I could imagine; a dutiful and affectionate daughter to nurse and take care of me, a number of promising grandchildren, some old

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measure so thoroughly discussed as our proposed new Constitution. Many objections were made to it in the public papers, and answers to those objections. Much party heat there was, and some violent personal abuse. I kept out of the dispute, and wrote only one little paper on the occasion, which I enclose. You seem to be too apprehensive about our President's being perpetual. Neither he nor we have any such intentions; of what danger there may be of such an event we are all aware, and shall take care effectually to prevent it. The choice is from four years to five years; the appointments will be small Thus we may change our President if we do not like his conduct, and he will have less inducement to struggle for a new election. As to the *two* chambers, I am of your opinion, that *one alone* would be better; but, my dear friend, nothing in human affairs and schemes is perfect; and perhaps this is the case of our opinions." — *October 24th.* On this subject of a single legislative body, see Vol. V. p. 165

friends still remaining to converse with, and more respect, distinction, and public honors than I can possibly merit. These are the blessings of God, and depend on his continued goodness; yet all do not make me forget Paris, and the nine years' happiness I enjoyed there, in the sweet society of a people whose conversation is instructive, whose manners are highly pleasing, and who, above all the nations of the world, have, in the greatest perfection, the art of making themselves beloved by strangers. And now, even in my sleep, I find, that the scenes of all my pleasant dreams are laid in that city, or in its neighbourhood.

I like much young M. Dupont. He appears a very sensible and valuable man, and I think his father will have a great deal of satisfaction in him.

Please to present my thanks to M. Lavoisier for the *Nomenclature Chimique* he has been so good as to send me, (it must be a very useful book,) and assure him of my great and sincere esteem and attachment. My best wishes attend you both; and I think I cannot wish you and him greater happiness, than a long continuance of the connexion. With great regard and affection, I have the honor to be, my dear friend, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO JOHN INGENHOUSZ.

State of his Health. — Steamboat.

Philadelphia, 24 October, 1788.

—— You have always been kind enough to interest yourself in what relates to my health. I ought therefore to acquaint you with what appears to me something curious respecting it. You may remember the cutaneous malady, I formerly complained of, and for

which you and Dr. Pringle favored me with prescriptions and advice. It vexed me near fourteen years, and was, the beginning of this year, as bad as ever, covering almost my whole body, except my face and hands; when a fit of the gout came on, without very much pain, but a swelling in both feet, which at last appeared also in both knees, and then in my hands. As these swellings increased and extended, the other malady diminished, and at length disappeared entirely. Those swellings have some time since begun to fall, and are now almost gone; perhaps the cutaneous disease may return, or perhaps it is worn out. I may hereafter let you know what happens. I am on the whole much weaker than when it began to leave me. But possibly that may be the effect of age, for I am now near eighty-three, the age of commencing decrepitude.

I grieve at the wars Europe is engaged in, and wish they were ended; for I fear even the victors will be losers. I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. Our public affairs are drawing towards a settlement. I have served out the three years' term of my presidentship, limited by the Constitution; and, being determined to engage no more in public business, I hope, if health permits, to be a better correspondent. We have no philosophical news here at present, except that a boat moved by a steam engine rows itself against tide in our river, and it is apprehended the construction may be so simplified and improved as to become generally useful.*

* Alluding probably to Fitch's steamboat. See above, p. 232.

TO BENJAMIN VAUGHAN.

Memoirs of his Life. — Turkish War. — Price and Priestley. — Heresy.

Philadelphia, 24 October, 1788.

—— Having now finished my term in the Presidentship, and resolving to engage no more in public affairs, I hope to be a better correspondent for the little time I have to live. I am recovering from a long-continued gout, and am diligently employed in writing the History of my Life, to the doing of which the persuasions contained in your letter of January 31st, 1783, have not a little contributed. I am now in the year 1756, just before I was sent to England. To shorten the work, as well as for other reasons, I omit all facts and transactions, that may not have a tendency to benefit the young reader, by showing him from my example, and my success in emerging from poverty, and acquiring some degree of wealth, power, and reputation, the advantages of certain modes of conduct which I observed, and of avoiding the errors which were prejudicial to me. If a writer can judge properly of his own work, I fancy, on reading over what is already done, that the book will be found entertaining, interesting, and useful, more so than I expected when I began it. If my present state of health continues, I hope to finish it this winter. When done, you shall have a manuscript copy of it, that I may obtain from your judgment and friendship such remarks, as may contribute to its improvement.

The violence of our party debates about the new Constitution seems much abated, indeed almost extinct, and we are getting fast into good order. I kept out of those disputes pretty well, having wrote only one little piece, which I send you enclosed.

I regret the immense quantity of misery brought upon mankind by this Turkish war; and I am afraid the King of Sweden may burn his fingers by attacking Russia. When will princes learn arithmetic enough to calculate, if they want pieces of one another's territory, how much cheaper it would be to buy them, than to make war for them, even though they were to give a hundred years' purchase? But, if glory cannot be valued, and therefore the wars for it cannot be subject to arithmetical calculation so as to show their advantage or disadvantage, at least wars for trade, which have gain for their object, may be proper subjects for such computation; and a trading nation, as well as a single trader, ought to calculate the probabilities of profit and loss, before engaging in any considerable adventure. This however nations seldom do, and we have had frequent instances of their spending more money in wars for acquiring or securing branches of commerce, than a hundred years' profit or the full enjoyment of them can compensate.

Remember me affectionately to good Dr. Price, and to the honest heretic, Dr. Priestley. I do not call him *honest* by way of distinction; for I think all the heretics I have known have been virtuous men. They have the virtue of fortitude, or they would not venture to own their heresy; and they cannot afford to be deficient in any of the other virtues, as that would give advantage to their many enemies; and they have not, like orthodox sinners, such a number of friends to excuse or justify them. Do not, however, mistake me. It is no to my good friend's heresy that I impute his honesty. On the contrary, it is his honesty that has brought upon him the character of heretic. I am ever, my dear friend, yours sincerely,

B. Franklin.

TO MRS. ELIZABETH PARTRIDGE.

Philadelphia, 25 November, 1788.

—— You tell me our poor friend Ben Kent is gone; I hope to the regions of the blessed; or at least to some place where souls are prepared for those regions. I found my hope on this, that, though not so orthodox as you and I, he was an honest man, and had his virtues. If he had any hypocrisy it was of that inverted kind, with which a man is not so bad as he seems to be. And, with regard to future bliss, I cannot help imagining, that multitudes of the zealously orthodox of different sects, who at the last day may flock together in hopes of seeing each other damned, will be disappointed, and obliged to rest content with their own salvation. Yours, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO MRS. JANE MECOM.

Philadelphia, 26 November, 1788.

MY DEAR SISTER,

I received your kind letter of the 11th instant. The two former ones you mention, I had answered, though it seems the answer had not reached you. If it has finally miscarried, I will look for the letters, and answer them again.

I am sorry you should suffer so much uneasiness with tears and apprehensions about my health. There are in life real evils enough, and it is a folly to afflict ourselves with imaginary ones; and it is time enough when the real ones arrive. I see by the papers that to-morrow is your thanksgiving day. The flour will arrive too late for your plum puddings, for I find it

went from hence but a few days since. I hope, however, it will be with you before the winter shuts up your harbour.

I never see any Boston newspapers. You mention there being often something in them to do me honor. I am obliged to them. On the other hand, some of our papers here are endeavouring to disgrace me. I take no notice. My friends defend me. I have long been accustomed to receive more blame, as well as more praise, than I have deserved. It is the lot of every public man, and I leave one account to balance the other.

As you observe, there was no swearing in the story of the poker, when I told it. The late new dresser of it was, probably, the same, or perhaps akin to him, who, in relating a dispute that happened between Queen Anne and the Archbishop of Canterbury, concerning a vacant mitre, which the Queen was for bestowing on a person the Archbishop thought unworthy, made both the Queen and the Archbishop swear three or four thumping oaths in every sentence of the discussion, and the Archbishop at last gained his point. One present at this tale, being surprised, said, "But did the Queen and the Archbishop swear so at one another?" "O no, no," says the relator; "that is only *my way* of telling the story."

This family is all well at present, and join in love to you and yours, with your affectionate brother,

B. Franklin.

TO CHARLES THOMSON, SECRETARY OF CONGRESS.

Dr. Franklin's Public Services.

Philadelphia, 29 November, 1788.

DEAR OLD FRIEND,

Enclosed I send a letter to the President of Congress for the time being, which, if you find nothing improper in it, or that in regard to me you could wish changed or amended, I would request you to present. I rely much on your friendly counsel, as you must be better acquainted with persons and circumstances than I am; and I suppose there will be time enough before the new Congress is formed to make any alterations you may advise, though, if presented at all, it should be to the old one.

In the copy of my letter to Mr. Barclay you may observe, that mention is made of some "considerable articles which I have not charged in my accounts with Congress, but on which I should expect from their equity some consideration." That you may have some information what those articles are, I enclose also a "*Sketch of my Services to the United States*," wherein you will find mention of the *extra services* I performed, that do not appertain to the office of plenipotentiary, viz. as judge of admiralty, as consul before the arrival of Mr. Barclay, as banker in examining and accepting the multitude of bills of exchange, and as secretary for several years, none being sent to me, though other ministers were allowed such assistance.

I must own, I did hope, that, as it is customary in Europe to make some liberal provision for ministers when they return home from foreign service, the Congress would at least have been kind enough to have shown their approbation of my conduct by a grant of

a small tract of land in their western country, which might have been of use and some honor to my posterity. And I cannot but still think they will do something of the kind for me, whenever they shall be pleased to take my services into consideration; as I see by their minutes, that they have allowed Mr. Lee handsomely for his services in England, before his appointment to France, in which services I and Mr. Bollan coöperated with him, and have had no such allowance; and, since his return, he has been very properly rewarded with a good place, as well as my friend Mr. Jay; though these are trifling compensations in comparison with what was granted by the King to M. Gérard on his return from America.

But how different is what has happened to me. On my return from England, in 1775, the Congress bestowed on me the office of postmaster-general, for which I was very thankful. It was indeed an office I had some kind of right to, as having previously greatly enlarged the revenue of the post by the regulations I had contrived and established, while I possessed it under the crown. When I was sent to France, I left it in the hands of my son-in-law, who was to act as my deputy. But soon after my departure, it was taken from me, and given to Mr. Hazard. When the English ministry formerly thought fit to deprive me of the office, they left me, however, the privilege of receiving and sending my letters free of postage, which is the usage when a postmaster is not displaced for misconduct in the office; but, in America, I have ever since had the postage demanded of me, which, since my return from France, has amounted to above fifty pounds, much of it occasioned by my having acted as minister there.

When I took my grandson, William Temple Frank-

lin, with me to France, I purposed, after giving him the French language, to educate him in the study and practice of the law. But, by the repeated expectations given me of a secretary, and constant disappointments, I was induced, and indeed obliged, to retain him with me, to assist in the secretary's office, which disappointments continued till my return, by which time, so many years of the opportunity of his studying the law were lost, and his habits of life become so different, that it appeared no longer advisable; and I then, considering him as brought up in the diplomatic line, and well qualified by his knowledge in that branch for the employ of a secretary at least, (in which opinion I was not alone, for three of my colleagues, without the smallest solicitation from me, chose him secretary of the negotiation for treaties, which they had been empowered to do,) took the liberty of recommending him to the Congress for their protection. This was the only favor I ever asked of them; and the only answer I received was, a resolution superseding him, and appointing Colonel Humphreys in his place; a gentleman, who, though he might have indeed a good deal of military merit, certainly had none in the diplomatic line, and had neither the French language, nor the experience, nor the address, proper to qualify him for such an employment.

This is all to yourself only, as a private friend; for I have not, nor ever shall, make any public complaint; and, even if I could have foreseen such unkind treatment from Congress, their refusing me thanks would not in the least have abated my zeal for the cause, and ardor in support of it. I know something of the nature of such changeable assemblies, and how little successors know of the services that have been rendered to the corps before their admission, or feel them-

selves obliged by such services; and what effect in obliterating a sense of them, during the absence of the servant in a distant country, the artful and reiterated malevolent insinuations of one or two envious and malicious persons may have on the minds of members, even of the most equitable, candid, and honorable dispositions; and therefore I will pass these reflections into oblivion.

My good friend, excuse, if you can, the trouble of this letter; and if the reproach thrown on republics, that *they are apt to be ungrateful*, should ever unfortunately be verified with respect to *your* services, remember that you have a right to unbosom yourself in communicating your griefs to your ancient friend and most obedient humble servant,

B. Franklin.

Sketch of the Services of B. Franklin to the United States of America.

In England, he combated the Stamp Act, and his writings in the papers against it, with his examination in Parliament, were thought to have contributed much to its repeal.

He opposed the Duty Act; and, though he could not prevent its passing, he obtained of Mr. Townshend an omission of several articles, particularly salt.

In the subsequent difference he wrote and published many papers, refuting the claim of Parliament to tax the colonies.

He opposed all the oppressive acts.

He had two secret negotiations with the ministers for their repeal, of which he has written a narrative. In this he offered payment for the destroyed tea, at his own risk, in case they were repealed.

He was joined with Messrs. Bollan and Lee in all

the applications to government for that purpose. Printed several pamphlets at his own considerable expense against the then measures of government, whereby he rendered himself obnoxious, was disgraced before the privy council, deprived of a place in the postoffice of £300 sterling a year, and obliged to resign his agencies, viz.

of Pennsylvania . . .	£500
of Massachusetts	400
of New Jersey	100
of Georgia	200
	£1200

In the whole £1500 sterling per annum.

Orders were sent to the King's governors not to sign any warrants on the treasury for the orders of his salaries; and, though he was not actually dismissed by the colonies that employed him, yet, thinking the known malice of the court against him rendered him less likely than others to manage their affairs to their advantage, he judged it to be his duty to withdraw from their service, and leave it open for less exceptionable persons, which saved them the necessity of removing him.

Returning to America, he encouraged the Revolution. Was appointed chairman of the Committee of Safety, where he projected the *chevaux de frise* for securing Philadelphia, then the residence of Congress.

Was sent by Congress to head-quarters near Boston with Messrs. Harrison and Lynch, in 1775, to settle some affairs with the northern governments and General Washington.

In the spring of 1776, was sent to Canada with Messrs. Chase and Carroll, passing the Lakes while they were not yet free from ice. In Canada, was, with his

colleagues, instrumental in redressing sundry grievances, and thereby reconciling the people more to our cause. He there advanced to General Arnold and other servants of Congress, then in extreme necessity, £353 in gold, out of his own pocket, on the credit of Congress, which was of great service at that juncture, in procuring provisions for our army.

Being at the time he was ordered on this service upwards of seventy years of age, he suffered in his health by the hardships of this journey; lodging in the woods, &c., in so inclement a season; but, being recovered, the Congress in the same year ordered him to France. Before his departure, he put all the money he could raise, between three and four thousand pounds, into their hands; which, demonstrating his confidence, encouraged others to lend their money in support of the cause.

He made no bargain for appointments, but was promised by a vote, the *net* salary of £500 sterling per annum, his expense paid, and to be assisted by a secretary, who was to have £1000 per annum, to include all contingencies.

When the Pennsylvania Assembly sent him to England in 1764, on the same salary, they allowed him one year's advance for his passage, and in consideration of the prejudice to his private affairs that must be occasioned by his sudden departure and absence. He has had no such allowance from Congress, was badly accommodated in a miserable vessel, improper for those northern seas, (and which actually foundered in her return,) was badly fed, so that on his arrival he had scarce strength to stand.

His services to the States as commissioner, and afterwards as minister plenipotentiary are known to Congress, as may appear in his correspondence. His

extra services may not be so well known, and therefore may be here mentioned. No secretary ever arriving, the business was in part before, and entirely when the other commissioners left him, executed by himself, with the help of his grandson, who at first was only allowed clothes, board, and lodging, and afterwards a salary, never exceeding £300 a year, (except while he served as secretary to the Commissioners for peace,) by which difference in salary, continued many years, the Congress saved, *if they accept it*, £700 *sterling a year*.

He served as *consul* entirely several years, till the arrival of Mr. Barclay, and even after, as that gentleman was obliged to be much and long absent in Holland, Flanders, and England; during which absence, what business of the kind occurred, still came to Mr. Franklin.

He served, though without any special commission for the purpose, as a *judge of admiralty;* for, the Congress having sent him a quantity of blank commissions for privateers, he granted them to cruisers fitted out in the ports of France, some of them manned by old smugglers, who knew every creek on the coast of England, and, running all round the island, distressed the British coasting trade exceedingly, and raised their general insurance. One of those privateers alone, the *Black Prince*, took in the course of a year seventy-five sail! All the papers, taken in each prize brought in, were in virtue of an order of council sent up to Mr. Franklin, who was to examine them, judge of the legality of the capture, and write to the admiralty of the port, that he found the prize good, and that the sale might be permitted. These papers, which are very voluminous, he has to produce.

He served also as *merchant*, to make purchases, and direct the shipping of stores to a very great value, for which he has charged no commission.

But the part of his service which was the most fatiguing and confining, was that of receiving and accepting, after a due and necessary examination, the bills of exchange drawn by Congress for interest money, to the amount of *two millions and a half of livres annually;* multitudes of the bills very small, each of which, the smallest, gave as much trouble in examining, as the largest. And this careful examination was found absolutely necessary, from the constant frauds attempted by presenting *seconds* and *thirds* for payment after the *firsts* had been discharged. As these bills were arriving more or less by every ship and every post, they required constant attendance. Mr. Franklin could make no journey for exercise, as had been annually his custom, and the confinement brought on a malady that is likely to afflict him while he lives.

In short, though he has always been an active man, he never went through so much business during eight years, in any part of his life, as during those of his residence in France; which however he did not decline till he saw peace happily made, and found himself in the eightieth year of his age; when, if ever, a man has some right to expect repose.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Requesting a Settlement of his Accounts.

Philadelphia, 29 November, 1788.

SIR,

When I had the honor of being the Minister of the United States at the court of France, Mr. Barclay, arriving there, brought me the following resolution of Congress.

"Resolved, that a commissioner be appointed by

Congress with full power and authority to liquidate, and *finally to settle*, the accounts of all the servants of the United States, who have been intrusted with the expenditure of public money in Europe, and to commence and prosecute such suits, causes, and actions as may be necessary for the purpose, or for the recovery of any property of the said United States in the hands of any person, or persons, whatsoever.

"That the said commissioner be authorized to appoint one or more clerks, with such allowance as he may think reasonable.

"That the said commissioner and clerks, respectively, take an oath before some person duly authorized to administer an oath, faithfully to execute the trust reposed in them respectively.

"Congress proceeded to the election of a commissioner, and, ballots being taken, Mr. Thomas Barclay was elected."

In pursuance of this resolution, and as soon as Mr. Barclay was at leisure from more pressing business, I rendered to him all my accounts, which he examined, and stated methodically. By this statement he found a balance due to me on the 4th of May, 1785, of 7,533 livres, 19 sols, 3 derniers, which I accordingly received of the Congress banker; the difference between my statement and his being only seven sols, which by mistake I had overcharged; about three pence half penny sterling.

At my request, however, the accounts were left open for the consideration of Congress, and not finally settled, there being some articles on which I desired their judgment, and having some equitable demands, as I thought them, for extra services, which he had not conceived himself empowered to allow, and therefore I did not put them in my account. He transmitted the ac

counts to Congress, and had advice of their being received. On my arrival at Philadelphia, one of the first things I did was to despatch my grandson, William T. Franklin, to New York, to obtain a final settlement of those accounts; he, having long acted as my secretary, and being well acquainted with the transactions, was able to give an explanation of the articles, that might seem to require explaining, if any such there were. He returned without effecting the settlement, being told, that it could not be made till the arrival of some documents expected from France. What those documents were, I have not been informed, nor can I readily conceive, as all the vouchers existing there had been examined by Mr. Barclay. And I, having been immediately after my arrival engaged in the public business of this State, waited in expectation of hearing from Congress, in case any part of my accounts had been objected to.

It is now more than three years that those accounts have been before that honorable body, and, to this day, no notice of any such objection has been communicated to me. But reports have, for some time past, been circulated here, and propagated in the newspapers, that I am greatly indebted to the United States for large sums, that had been put into my hands, and that I avoid a settlement. This, together with the little time one of my age may expect to live, makes it necessary for me to request earnestly, which I hereby do, that the Congress would be pleased, without further delay, to examine those accounts, and if they find therein any article or articles, which they do not understand or approve, that they would cause me to be acquainted with the same, that I may have an opportunity of offering such explanations or reasons in sup-

port of them as may be in my power, and then that the accounts may be finally closed.

I hope the Congress will soon be able to attend to this business for the satisfaction of the public, as well as in condescension to my request. In the mean time, if there be no impropriety in it, I would desire that this letter, together with another * relating to the same subject, the copy of which is hereto annexed, may be put upon their minutes. With every sentiment of respect and duty to Congress, I am, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.†

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* A letter to Mr. Barclay, written in France; see above, p. 184.

† The requests contained in this letter were never complied with. Some months afterwards Charles Thomson, the Secretary of Congress, wrote to him as follows.

"Dear Sir; I am sorry to inform you, that the apprehensions suggested in my last are realized. The delegates, whom the States appointed to conduct the business of the Union in Congress till the meeting of the new government, have not assembled in sufficient number to form a House. Consequently there was no opportunity of laying your letter before them, and getting it inserted on their minutes. I now wish to be informed what is to be done with it; whether you would desire it to remain among the other papers of the late Congress, or have it returned to you. I shall wait your orders. In the mean while accept a fresh assurance of the sincere esteem and regard with which I am, &c."— *New York, March 7th*, 1789.

There is no evidence, that any farther efforts were made by Dr. Franklin to obtain justice from Congress. On the 1st of April, 1789, a sufficient number of members had assembled to organize the Congress under the new Constitution; but there is no record in the Journals, which shows that the above letter to the President of the old Congress was ever laid before that body, or that the subject was in any manner brought into consideration. Dr. Franklin's accounts, therefore, remained unsettled till his death, notwithstanding his repeated solicitations to have them examined, adjusted, and closed. No allowance was ever granted for the "equitable demands for extra services," to which he thought himself entitled, nor were the grounds of them even made a subject of inquiry; no vote of thanks or approbation was passed for his long, steady, and most successful labors in the cause of his country. These evidences of ingratitude and neglect are humiliating, but history should speak with an impartial voice. When time has cooled the heat of passion, and the feuds of party are forgotten, men will be judged by their acts. As

FROM MISS CATHERINE LOUISA SHIPLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

On the Death of her Father, the Bishop of St. Asaph.

Bolton Street, 24 December, 1788.

My dear Friend,

It is a great while since I wrote to you, and still longer since I heard from you; but I have now a particular pleasure in writing to one, who had long known and loved the dear good parent I have lost.* You will probably, before you receive this, have heard of my father's death; his illness was short, and terminated in an apoplexy. He was seldom perfectly in his senses for the last four days, but such constant calmness and composure could only have attended the deathbed of a truly good man. How unlike the ideas I had formed to myself of death, which, till now, I had only seen at a distance, and heard of with terror. The nearer his last moment approached, the more his ideas seemed elevated; and, but for those whom living he had loved with tenderness, and dying he still felt interested for, he showed no regret at leaving this world. I believe his many virtues have called down a blessing on his family, for we have all been supported under this severe affliction beyond what I could have imagined; and, though sorrow will for a time get the better of every other sensation, I feel *now* that the strongest impression left by his death is the desire of imitating his virtues in an humbler sphere of life.

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affording some explanation of the tardiness of Congress in attending to Dr. Franklin's accounts, it is enough to state, that Mr. Arthur Lee was one of the Commissioners of the Treasury, by whom those accounts were first to be examined.

* The Bishop of St. Asaph died in London, on the 9th of December, 1788.

My dear mother's health, I hope, will not have suffered materially; and she has every consolation to be derived from the reflection, that, for forty-five years, it was the study of her life to make the best of husbands happy. He, in return, has shown that his attention to *her* ease and comfort did not end with his life. He was happily preserved to us so long as to be able to leave all his family in good circumstances. I fancy my mother, Bessy, and I, shall live at Twyford, but at present no place is settled.

May I flatter myself, that you will still feel some affection for the family of your good old friend, and let me have the happiness of hearing it from yourself? I shall request Dr. Price to send this letter. My mother, brother, and sisters, beg to be all most kindly remembered. Believe me, dear Sir, your faithful and obliged CATHERINE LOUISA SHIPLEY.

FROM RICHARD PRICE TO B. FRANKLIN.

Death of the Bishop of St. Asaph. — Dr. Rush. — Federal Constitution. — Affairs in England.

Hackney, December, 1788.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have been desired by Miss Kitty Shipley to convey to you the enclosed letter; and I cannot at present find any way of conveying it except by the packet. It will inform you of the death of one of your warmest friends, and the best of bishops. Ever since the American war, I have been honored with much of his attention and friendship; and I cannot but mourn the loss, which his family, his friends, and the world have sustained. His family are in a state of deep concern, but

at the same time inquisitive about you, and anxious to receive some information about you. You can be nowhere more beloved or respected.

I have heard with pain, that you have been suffering under the gout and stone, two sad maladies; but, alas! it is impossible that our bodily frame, as it wears out, and approaches to its dissolution, should not subject us to sufferings. Happy are those, who, in such circumstances, can look back on a life distinguished by such services as yours have been. There is, I trust, beyond the grave, a world where we shall all meet, and rise to greater happiness than any we have enjoyed here.

Will you be so good as to deliver my compliments to Dr. Rush. You have, I know, too much to do, and too many letters to answer, and therefore I can only wish that Dr. Rush would give me an account of you. He has frequently favored me with letters, and they generally gratify me highly by informing me of the state of affairs in the United States. His last letter was dated in May, and I answered it in June by Mr. Bishop, a gentleman from Connecticut, who was returning from his travels through France and Germany.

I rejoice to find that the Federal Constitution has been adopted by the States. This confirms me in the hope, that a state of things is commencing there more favorable to human rights, than any that has yet been known in this world. One of the circumstances, in which I am most disposed to rejoice, is, the separation which has taken place there of religion from civil policy, and the free scope given to discussion and improvement, by abolishing the interposition of civil power in matters of speculation, and extending equal protection to all religious sects, as far as they avoid injuring one another.

I received some time ago a letter from Dr. White. Will you, should he happen to come in your way, deliver to him my respectful and grateful acknowledgments. I have thought it needless to trouble him with an answer to his letter. He probably soon found, that it was not possible to assist Mr. Workman, the person he recommended, in the manner he proposed.

Our King's insanity has brought us in this country into a state, that threatens us with much confusion. The Prince of Wales is likely to bring with him into power the coalition party. The King may recover, and this party may be soon routed again. A relapse may produce another rout, or the Prince, after being invested with power, may be too tenacious of it; and thus the worst evils may arise. The coalition party, however, will hardly do us more mischief than the late ministry seems to me to have done, by connecting us in such a manner with Prussia, Hesse, and Holland, as to subject us to the danger of being involved soon in another continental war. But I have gone beyond the bounds I intended in this letter. Accept my ardent wishes, that the remainder of your life may be as happy as possible. In hopes of not being forgotten by you, I am ever most affectionately yours,

RICHARD PRICE.

TO THE ABBÉ MORELLET.*

Philadelphia, 30 December, 1788.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

The suspension of the packet has interrupted our correspondence. It is a long, a very long time, since

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* Translated from a French copy, as published in the *Mémoires de l'Abbé Morellet.*

I have had any news from Auteuil. I lately learned from M. de Chaumont, that a great many letters, which I had sent to New York, remained there several months, no packet having sailed for France.

Let me know, I pray you, if you have received from me some remarks on the reasons alleged by the English for their refusal to deliver up the military posts on our frontiers. I sent them to you, more than a year since, in return for your excellent little humorous piece *Des Guichets*, and for your *Essai de Cométologie*, which have amused me and several of my friends very much. In this dearth of news from the *Academy of Auteuil*, I read over and over again, with pleasure always new, your letters and those of the Abbé de La Roche, and the pieces which you sent me, in July, 1787, and the scrawl, as she herself calls it, of the good lady,* whom we all love, and whose remembrance I shall cherish while a breath of life remains; and whenever, in my dreams, I transport myself to France, to visit my friends there, I go first to Auteuil.

I send you something rather curious; some songs and music composed in America, and the first of our productions in that line. I thought some of them might be to your taste, from their simplicity and pathos. The poetry of the fifth pleases me particularly, and I wish you, or M. de Cabanis, to translate it into your own language, so that the translation may be sung to the same air.

My letter will be handed to you by Mr. Gouverneur Morris, formerly member of Congress, and a member of the Convention which framed the Federal Constitution. He is much esteemed here by all who know

* Madame Helvetius.

him; and, as he is my friend, I recommend him to your attentions, as well as to those of M. de Marmontel and all your family.

I flatter myself with the hope that your last troubles are quieted. I tenderly love your country, and consider myself deeply interested in its prosperity. Now that I have just finished the third year of my presidency, and as henceforward I shall not have to take part in public affairs, I begin to look upon myself, *as a free man*, who have nothing more to do, but to enjoy the little time which remains to me. I shall employ a part of it in writing my own history, which, in recalling the past to my remembrance, will, so to speak, make me begin life anew. I am always, my dear friend, &c. B. Franklin.

TO ALEXANDER SMALL.

Philadelphia, 17 February, 1789.

Dear Friend,

I have just received your kind letter of November 29th, and am much obliged by your friendly attention in sending me the receipt, which on occasion I may make trial of; but the stone I have being a large one, as I find by the weight it falls with when I turn in bed, I have no hope of its being dissoluble by any medicine; and having been for some time past pretty free from pain, I am afraid of tampering. I congratulate you on the escape you had by avoiding the one you mention, that was as big as a kidney bean; had it been retained, it might soon have become too large to pass, and proved the cause of much pain at times, as mine has been to me.

Having served my time of three years as president, I have now renounced all public business, and enjoy

the *otium cum dignitate.* My friends indulge me with their frequent visits, which I have now leisure to receive and enjoy. The Philosophical Society, and the Society for Political Inquiries, meet at my house, which I have enlarged by additional building, that affords me a large room for those meetings, another over it for my library now very considerable, and over all some lodging rooms. I have seven promising grandchildren by my daughter, who play with and amuse me, and she is a kind attentive nurse to me when I am at any time indisposed; so that I pass my time as agreeably as at my age a man may well expect, and have little to wish for, except a more easy exit than my malady seems to threaten.

The deafness you complain of gives me concern, as if great it must diminish considerably your pleasure in conversation. If moderate, you may remedy it easily and readily, by putting your thumb and fingers behind your ear, pressing it outwards, and enlarging it, as it were, with the hollow of your hand. By an exact experiment I found, that I could hear the tick of a watch at forty-five feet distance by this means, which was barely audible at twenty feet without it. The experiment was made at midnight when the house was still.

I am glad you have sent those directions respecting ventilation to the Edinburgh Society. I hope you have added an account of the experience you had of it at Minorca. If they do not print your paper, send it to me, and it shall be in the third volume, which we are about to publish of our Transactions.

Mrs. Hewson joins with us in best wishes for your health and happiness. Her eldest son has gone through his studies at our college, and taken his degree. The youngest is still there, and will be graduated this sum-

mer. My grandson presents his respects; and I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. Franklin.

P. S. You never mention the receipt of any letters from me. I wish to know if they come to hand, particularly my last enclosing the *Apologue*. You mention some of my old friends being dead, but not their names.

TO MRS. CATHERINE GREENE.

Philadelphia, 2 March, 1789.

Dear Friend,

Having now done with public affairs, which have hitherto taken up so much of my time, I shall endeavour to enjoy, during the small remainder of life that is left to me, some of the pleasures of conversing with my old friends by writing, since their distance prevents my hope of seeing them again.

I received one of the bags of sweet corn you were so good as to send me a long time since, but the other never came to hand. Even the letter mentioning it, though dated December 10th, 1787, has been above a year on its way; for I received it but about two weeks since from Baltimore in Maryland. The corn I did receive was excellent, and gave me great pleasure. Accept my hearty thanks.

I am, as you suppose in the abovementioned old letter, much pleased to hear, that my young friend Ray is "smart in the farming way," and makes such substantial fences. I think agriculture the most honorable of all employments, being the most independent. The farmer has no need of popular favor, nor the favor of the great; the success of his crops depending only

on the blessing of God upon his honest industry. I congratulate your good spouse, that he, as well as myself, is now free from public cares, and that he can bend his whole attention to his farming, which will afford him both profit and pleasure; a business which nobody knows better how to manage with advantage.

I am too old to follow printing again myself, but, loving the business, I have brought up my grandson Benjamin to it, and have built and furnished a printing-house for him, which he now manages under my eye. I have great pleasure in the rest of my grandchildren, who are now in number eight, and all promising, the youngest only six months old, but shows signs of great good nature. My friends here are numerous, and I enjoy as much of their conversation as I can reasonably wish; and I have as much health and cheerfulness, as can well be expected at my age, now eighty-three. Hitherto this long life has been tolerably happy; so that, if I were allowed to live it over again, I should make no objection, only wishing for leave to do, what authors do in a second edition of their works, correct some of my *errata*. Among the felicities of my life I reckon your friendship, which I shall remember with pleasure as long as that life lasts, being ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. Franklin

FROM M. LE VEILLARD TO B. FRANKLIN.

State of Affairs in France. — Duke of Orleans.

Translation.

Passy, 25 April, 1789.

My dear Friend,

Since your letter of the 10th of December last, I have had no other from you. We are at last on the

eve of the assembling of the States-General. If any one had said, when you were with us, that this was even a possible thing, he would have run a great risk of finding himself in the Bastille before night. I do not know how much good they will do; but in the mean while people say and print whatever they please, and nobody is sent to prison. The demands of the different deputations are for the most part publicly known. Many give very narrow limits to the royal authority, and all without exception require, that, before attending to any thing else, a constitution shall be established, which shall give legislative authority to the nation, either conjointly with the King or independently of him; which shall determine the composition and the mode of action of a permanent assembly of the States-General, or of a body which may come together without being specially called, at short and stated intervals; and which shall give full security to personal liberty and to property, and to the liberty of the press, with the condition, that the printer shall affix his name to the works he publishes. They demand, moreover, the abolition of all privileges and exemptions relating to the payment of taxes, the reform of civil and criminal laws, and the responsibility of ministers. This is not all; but upon this basis, if once established, we shall build up a government, not perfect indeed, for that is beyond the reach of humanity, but good enough to satisfy any reasonable being.

Unfortunately the priests and the nobles are not yet sufficiently moderate, nor the lower classes sufficiently enlightened. The intermediate classes are for this reason odious to the former, and not properly valued by the latter, who are dazzled and blinded by the first rays of a liberty, of which they had not even an idea, and which intoxicates them, and renders them incapa-

ble of listening to reason. The nobility appear to insist upon their ill received claim of voting by orders, and not in common and individually. This would take from the *Third Estate* all the advantage of the number of its deputies, which by the rules is equal to that of the two other orders together. They therefore insist upon deliberating in common and voting individually, which is the only mode of substituting a true public spirit for the spirit of party. It is much to be feared, that this difficulty will occasion a disastrous schism.

Notwithstanding our recent calamities from hail-storms, the scarcity of grain, and our long winter, and notwithstanding we are in the midst of anarchy, and no one feels sure enough of obedience to dare to command, yet such is the mildness of the nation, that there are but few disorders. The disturbances in Brittany, in Provence, where M. de Mirabeau is playing a great part, in Dauphiny, and in Franche Comté, have died away. Not a hundred persons in all have been killed; and, if we obtain a reasonable constitution, it will be perhaps a better one than that of the English, and we shall pay less dear for it than either they or you have done.

Among those who are now most prominent, appears a man whom you never would have thought of; a man who, from his situation, his rank, his riches, and his independence, must either cover himself with glory in consummating the revolution, or with infamy if he fails and leaves it imperfect, by not maintaining the principles, which he has solemnly avowed; I mean the Duke of Orleans. He has doubtless great faults; but he has good qualities, which he was not thought to possess, and which he has to some extent proved in the late public calamities. His character, a mixture it is true of eccentricity and originality, promises some firmness;

and the abuse of power, which most unjustly deprived him so long of his liberty, must inspire him with a desire of revenge, which he cannot more fully gratify, than by reëstablishing, as firmly as possible, individual liberty, and consequently that of the nation.

April 30*th.* Most of the assemblies of Paris and the vicinity have been such scenes of tumult, that, after a long time spent in useless clamor, they have generally been obliged to break up without doing any business. They now appear, however, to be growing more quiet, and likely to come to some result; but the populace, especially the laboring men, either of their own accord or because they are in the pay of the malecontents, have been guilty of great disorders, and have pillaged houses, burnt furniture, maltreated and even killed some persons. Troops stationed in the environs have been called in. It was found necessary to fire upon the people, and last evening, it is believed, there were near a hundred persons killed, and at least as many wounded. To-day tranquillity is restored. Among the killed are twenty-five or thirty, who perished in frightful torments. They were destroying a paper factory, in the cellars of which they found *aqua fortis*, or oil of vitriol, which they drank for wine or *liqueur*.

Mr. Jefferson will probably hand you this letter. He will return to us next autumn, and I shall be really grieved if he comes with empty hands, and does not bring me the work, which you have so often promised. I am, &c.

LE VEILLARD.

TO MISS CATHERINE LOUISA SHIPLEY.

On the Death of her Father.

Philadelphia, 27 April, 1789.

It is only a few days since the kind letter of my dear young friend, dated December 24th, came to my hands. I had before, in the public papers, met with the afflicting news that letter contained. That excellent man has then left us! His departure is a loss, not to his family and friends only, but to his nation, and to the world; for he was intent on doing good, had wisdom to devise the means, and talents to promote them. His "Sermon before the Society for Propagating the Gospel," and his "Speech intended to have been spoken," * are proofs of his ability as well as his humanity. Had his counsels in those pieces been attended to by the ministers, how much bloodshed might have been prevented, and how much expense and disgrace to the nation avoided!

Your reflections on the constant calmness and composure attending his death are very sensible. Such instances seem to show, that the good sometimes enjoy in dying a foretaste of the happy state they are about to enter.

According to the course of years, I should have quitted this world long before him. I shall however not be long in following. I am now in my eighty-fourth year, and the last year has considerably enfeebled me; so that I hardly expect to remain another. You will then, my dear friend, consider this as probably the last

* This performance was published in 1774, and entitled, *A Speech intended to have been spoken on the Bill for altering the Charters of the Colony of Massachusetts Bay.* It has been greatly commended for the beauty of its style, and its just and liberal sentiments in regard to the controversy then existing between Great Britain and the Colonies.

line to be received from me, and as a taking leave. Present my best and most sincere respects to your good mother, and love to the rest of the family, to whom I wish all happiness; and believe me to be, while I *do* live, yours most affectionately,

B. Franklin.

TO CHARLES CARROLL.*

Philadelphia, 25 May, 1789.

Dear Friend,

I am glad to see by the papers, that our grand machine has at length begun to work. I pray God to bless and guide its operations. If any form of government is capable of making a nation happy, ours I think bids fair now for producing that effect. But, after all, much depends upon the people who are to be governed. We have been guarding against an evil that old States are most liable to, *excess of power* in the rulers; but our present danger seems to be *defect of obedience* in the subjects. There is hope, however, from the enlightened state of this age and country, we may guard effectually against that evil as well as the rest.

My grandson, William Temple Franklin, will have the honor of presenting this line. He accompanied me to France, and remained with me during my mission. I beg leave to recommend him to your notice, and that you would believe me, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. Franklin.

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* Mr. Carroll was at this time a Senator in Congress from Maryland. The first Congress under the new Constitution had recently convened in New York. In March, 1776, Dr. Franklin and Mr. Carroll had been joint commissioners, appointed by the Continental Congress with instructions to form a union between the Canadas and the United Colonies See Vol. VIII. p. 178.

TO RICHARD PRICE.

Reflections on Life and Death.

Philadelphia, 31 May, 1789.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

I lately received your kind letter, enclosing one from Miss Kitty Shipley, informing me of the good Bishop's decease, which afflicted me greatly. My friends drop off one after another, when my age and infirmities prevent my making new ones; and, if I still retained the necessary activity and ability, I hardly see among the existing generation where I could make them of equal goodness. So that the longer I live I must expect to be the more wretched. As we draw nearer the conclusion of life, nature furnishes us with more helps to wean us from it, among which one of the most powerful is the loss of such dear friends.

I send you with this the two volumes of our Transactions, as I forget whether you had the first before. If you had, you will please to give this to the French Ambassador, requesting his conveyance of it to the good Duke de la Rochefoucauld.

My best wishes attend you, being ever, with sincere and great esteem, my dear friend, yours most affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

TO BENJAMIN VAUGHAN.

Relative to the Memoirs of his Life.

Philadelphia, 3 June, 1789.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I received your kind letter of March 4th, and wish I may be able to complete what you so earnestly de

sire, the Memoirs of my Life. But of late I am so interrupted by extreme pain, which obliges me to have recourse to opium, that, between the effects of both, I have but little time in which I can write any thing. My grandson, however, is copying what is done, which will be sent to you for your opinion by the next vessel; and not merely for your opinion, but for your advice; for I find it a difficult task to speak decently and properly of one's own conduct; and I feel the want of a judicious friend to encourage me in scratching out.

I have condoled sincerely with the Bishop of St. Asaph's family. He was an excellent man. Losing our friends thus one by one, is the tax we pay for long living; and it is indeed a heavy one.

I have not seen the King of Prussia's posthumous works; what you mention makes me desirous to have them. Please to mention it to your brother William, and that I request him to add them to the books I have desired him to buy for me.

Our new government is now in train, and seems to promise well. But events are in the hand of God. I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO MRS. JANE MECOM.

Philadelphia, 3 August, 1789.

DEAR SISTER,

—— I am glad to learn, that you have at length got some of the letters I so long since wrote to you. I think your postoffice is very badly managed. I expect your bill, and shall pay it when it appears. I would have you put the books into our cousin's hands, who will dispose of them for you, if he can, or return

them hither. I am very much pleased to hear, that you have had no misunderstanding with his father. Indeed, if there had been any such, I should have concluded, it was your fault; for I think our family were always subject to being a little miffy.

By the way, is our relationship in Nantucket quite worn out? I have met with none from thence of late years, who were disposed to be acquainted with me, except Captain Timothy Folger. They are wonderfully shy. But I admire their honest plainness of speech. About a year ago I invited two of them to dine with me. Their answer was, that they would, if they could not do better. I suppose they did better; for I never saw them afterwards, and so had no opportunity of showing my miff, if I had one.

I shall make the addition you desire to my superscriptions, desiring in return that you will make a subtraction from yours. The word *Excellency* does not belong to me, and *Doctor* will be sufficient to distinguish me from my grandson.* This family joins in love to you and yours.

B. Franklin.

TO GEORGE WASHINGTON.

Philadelphia, 16 September, 1789.

Dear Sir,

My malady renders my sitting up to write rather painful to me; but I cannot let my son-in-law, Mr. Bache, part for New York, without congratulating you

* On this point his sister replied; "I was a little suspicious whether *Excellency* was according to rule in addressing my brother at this time; but I did not write the address; and of late, because he lives nearer than cousin Williams, I have sent my letters to Dr. Lathrop, who is very obliging to me, and I thought he must know what is right, and I gave no directions about it. But I shall do it another time." — *August* 23*d*.

by him on the recovery of your health, so precious to us all, and on the growing strength of our new government under your administration. For my own personal ease, I should have died two years ago; but, though those years have been spent in excruciating pain, I am pleased that I have lived them, since they have brought me to see our present situation. I am now finishing my eighty-fourth year, and probably with it my career in this life; but in whatever state of existence I am placed in hereafter, if I retain any memory of what has passed here, I shall with it retain the esteem, respect, and affection, with which I have long been, my dear friend, yours most sincerely

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM GEORGE WASHINGTON TO B. FRANKLIN.

New York, 23 September, 1789.

DEAR SIR,

The affectionate congratulations on the recovery of my health, and the warm expressions of personal friendship, which were contained in your letter of the 16th instant, claim my gratitude. And the consideration, that it was written when you were afflicted with a painful malady, greatly increases my obligation for it.

Would to God, my dear Sir, that I could congratulate you upon the removal of that excruciating pain, under which you labor, and that your existence might close with as much ease to yourself, as its continuance has been beneficial to our country and useful to mankind; or, if the united wishes of a free people, joined with the earnest prayers of every friend to science and humanity, could relieve the body from pains or infirmities, that you could claim an exemp-

tion on this score. But this cannot be, and you have within yourself the only resource to which we can confidently apply for relief, a philosophic mind.

If to be venerated for benevolence, if to be admired for talents, if to be esteemed for patriotism, if to be beloved for philanthropy, can gratify the human mind, you must have the pleasing consolation to know, that you have not lived in vain. And I flatter myself that it will not be ranked among the least grateful occurrences of your life to be assured, that, so long as I retain my memory, you will be recollected with respect, veneration, and affection by your sincere friend, GEORGE WASHINGTON.

TO BENJAMIN VAUGHAN.

Memoirs of his Life. — Rules for Composition. — Congress. — Parable against Persecution.

Philadelphia, 2 November, 1789.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I received your kind letter of August 8th. I thank you much for your intimations of the virtues of hemlock, but I have tried so many things with so little effect, that I am quite discouraged, and have no longer any faith in remedies for the stone. The palliating system is what I am now fixed in. Opium gives me ease when I am attacked by pain, and by the use of it I still make life at least tolerable. Not being able, however, to bear sitting to write, I now make use of the hand of one of my grandsons, dictating to him from my bed.

I wish, indeed, I had tried this method sooner; for so, I think, I might by this time have finished my Memoirs, in which I have made no progress for these

six months past. I have now taken the resolution to endeavour completing them in this way of dictating to an amanuensis. What is already done, I now send you, with an earnest request that you and my good friend Dr. Price would be so good as to take the trouble of reading it, critically examining it, and giving me your candid opinion whether I had best publish or suppress it; and if the first, then what parts had better be expunged or altered. I shall rely upon your opinions, for I am now grown so old and feeble in mind, as well as body, that I cannot place any confidence in my own judgment. In the mean time, I desire and expect that you will not suffer any copy of it, or of any part of it, to be taken for any purpose whatever.

You present me with a pleasing idea of the happiness I might have enjoyed in a certain great house, and in the conversation of its excellent owner, and his well chosen guests, if I could have spent some more time in England. That is now become impossible. My best wishes, however, attend him and his amiable son, in whose promising virtues and abilities I am persuaded the father will find much satisfaction.

The revolution in France is truly surprising. I sincerely wish it may end in establishing a good constitution for that country. The mischiefs and troubles it suffers in the operation, however, give me great concern.

You request advice from me respecting your conduct and writings, and desire me to tell you their faults. As to your conduct, I know of nothing that looks like a fault, except your declining to act in any public station, although you are certainly qualified to do much public good in many you must have had it in your power to occupy In respect to your writings, your lan-

guage seems to me to be good and pure, and your sentiments generally just; but your style or composition wants perspicuity, and this I think owing principally to a neglect of method. What I would therefore recommend to you is, that, before you sit down to write on any subject, you would spend some days in considering it, putting down at the same time, in short hints, every thought which occurs to you as proper to make a part of your intended piece. When you have thus obtained a collection of the thoughts, examine them carefully with this view, to find which of them is properest to be presented *first* to the mind of the reader, that he, being possessed of that, may the more easily understand it, and be better disposed to receive what you intend for the *second*; and thus I would have you put a figure before each thought, to mark its future place in your composition. For so, every preceding proposition preparing the mind for that which is to follow, and the reader often anticipating it, he proceeds with ease, and pleasure, and approbation, as seeming continually to meet with his own thoughts. In this mode you have a better chance for a perfect production; because, the mind attending first to the sentiments alone, next to the method alone, each part is likely to be better performed, and I think too in less time.

You see I give my counsel rather bluntly, without attempting to soften my manner of finding fault by any apology, which would give some people great offence; but in the present situation of affairs between us, when I am soliciting the advantage of your criticisms on a work of mine, it is perhaps my interest that you should be a little offended, in order to produce a greater degree of wholesome severity. I think with you, that, if my Memoirs are to be published, an edition of them

should be printed in England for that country, as well as here for this, and I shall gladly leave it to your friendly management.

We have now had one session of Congress under our new Constitution, which was conducted with, I think, a greater degree of temper, prudence, and unanimity, than could well have been expected, and our future prospects seem very favorable. The harvests of the last summer have been uncommonly plentiful and good; yet the produce bears a high price, from the great foreign demand. At the same time, immense quantities of foreign goods are crowded upon us, so as to overstock the market, and supply us with what we want at very low prices. A spirit of industry and frugality is also very generally prevailing, which, being the most promising sign of future national felicity, gives me infinite satisfaction.

Remember me most respectfully and affectionately to your good mother, sisters, and brother, and also to my dear Dr. Price; and believe me, my dearest friend, yours most sincerely,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. I have not received the Philosophical Transactions for the two or three last years. They are usually laid by for me at the Society's house, with my name upon them, and remain there till called for. I shall be much obliged to you, if you can conveniently take them up and send them to me.

Your mention of plagiarism puts me in mind of a charge of the same kind, which I lately saw in the British *Repository*, concerning the Chapter of Abraham and the Stranger. Perhaps this is the attack your letter hints at, in which you defended me. The truth is, as I think you observe, that I never published that

Chapter, and never claimed more credit from it, than what related to the style, and the addition of the concluding threatening and promise. The publishing of it by Lord Kames, without my consent, deprived me of a good deal of amusement, which I used to take in reading it by heart out of my Bible, and obtaining the remarks of the Scripturians upon it, which were sometimes very diverting; not but that it is in itself, on account of the importance of its moral, well worth being made known to all mankind.* When I wrote that in the form you now have it, I wrote also another,† the hint of which was also taken from an ancient Jewish tradition; but, not having the same success with it as the other, I laid it aside, and have not seen it for thirty years past, till within these few days a lady of my acquaintance furnished me with a copy, which she had preserved. I think however it is not a bad one, and send it to you enclosed. ——

TO JOHN WRIGHT, LONDON.

United States. — Abolition of the Slave Trade.

Philadelphia, 4 November, 1789.

DEAR FRIEND,

I received your kind letter of July the 31st, which gave me great pleasure, as it informed me of the wel-

* See the *Parable against Persecution*, Vol. II. p. 118. For some time after this Apologue first appeared, Dr. Franklin was charged with having published it as his own, whereas it was given to the world by Lord Kames without his consent or knowledge; nor did he ever claim any other originality in regard to it, than what he has mentioned above. But whoever will compare it as printed in this work, with the sources whence it was derived, will see that its chief point and beauty consist in the dress and additions, which it received from his hand; and indeed to this dress and these additions is to be ascribed the importance, that has been attached to it.

† Probably the *Parable on Brotherly Love*. See Vol. II. p. 123.

fare both of yourself and your good lady, to whom please to present my respects. I thank you for the epistle of your yearly meeting, and for the card, a specimen of printing, which was enclosed.

We have now had one session of Congress, which was conducted under our new Constitution, and with as much general satisfaction as could reasonably be expected. I wish the struggle in France may end as happily for that nation. We are now in the full enjoyment of our new government for *eleven* of the States, and it is generally thought that North Carolina is about to join it. Rhode Island will probably take longer time for consideration.

We have had a most plentiful year for the fruits of the earth, and our people seem to be recovering fast from the extravagance and idle habits, which the war had introduced; and to engage seriously in the country habits of temperance, frugality, and industry, which give the most pleasing prospect of future national felicity. Your merchants, however, are, I think, imprudent in crowding in upon us such quantities of goods for sale here, which are not written for by ours, and are beyond the faculties of this country to consume in any reasonable time. This surplus of goods is, therefore, to raise present money, sent to the vendues, or auction-houses, of which we have six or seven in and near this city; where they are sold frequently for less than prime cost, to the great loss of the indiscreet adventurers. Our newspapers are doubtless to be seen at your coffee-houses near the Exchange. In their advertisements you may observe the constancy and quantity of this kind of sales; as well as the quantity of goods imported by our regular traders. I see in your English newspapers frequent mention of our being out of credit with you; to us it appears, that we have abundantly

too much, and that your exporting merchants are rather out of their senses.

I wish success to your endeavours for obtaining an abolition of the Slave Trade. The epistle from your Yearly Meeting, for the year 1758, was not the *first sowing* of the good seed you mention; for I find by an old pamphlet in my possession, that George Keith, near a hundred years since, wrote a paper against the practice, said to be "given forth by the appointment of the meeting held by him, at Philip James's house, in the city of Philadelphia, about the year 1693;" wherein a strict charge was given to Friends, "that they should set their negroes at liberty, after some reasonable time of service, &c. &c." And about the year 1728, or 1729, I myself printed a book for Ralph Sandyford, another of your Friends in this city, against keeping negroes in slavery; two editions of which he distributed gratis. And about the year 1736, I printed another book on the same subject for Benjamin Lay, who also professed being one of your Friends, and he distributed the books chiefly among them. By these instances it appears, that the seed was indeed sown in the good ground of your profession, though much earlier than the time you mention, and its springing up to effect at last, though so late, is some confirmation of Lord Bacon's observation, that *a good motion never dies;* and it may encourage us in making such, though hopeless of their taking immediate effect.

I doubt whether I shall be able to finish my Memoirs, and, if I finish them, whether they will be proper for publication. You seem to have too high an opinion of them, and to expect too much from them.*

* Dr. Franklin did not complete his Memoirs to a later date than that of his first public mission to England, in the year 1757. Shortly after his death, they were continued to the end of his life by Dr. Stuber, and

I think you are right in preferring a mixed form of government for your country, under its present circumstances; and if it were possible for you to reduce the enormous salaries and emoluments of great officers, which are at bottom the source of all your violent factions, that form might be conducted more quietly and happily; but I am afraid, that none of your factions, when they get uppermost, will ever have virtue enough to reduce those salaries and emoluments, but will rather choose to enjoy them.

I enclose a bill for twenty-five pounds, for which, when received, please to credit my account, and out of it pay Mr. Benjamin Vaughan, of Jeffries Square, and Mr. William Vaughan, his brother, of Mincing

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were first published in the *Columbian Magazine*. This Continuation has often been printed in connexion with the autobiography. In HARDIE'S *New Universal Biographical Dictionary*, (Vol. IV. p. 292,) is a brief notice of the author's life. The following sketch has been furnished by Dr. John W. Francis, of New York.

"Henry Stuber was cut off too early in life to afford materials for much beyond the ordinary record of an obituary register. He was descended from German parents, and was born in Philadelphia, as nearly as can be ascertained, about the year 1770. The traditional accounts concerning him are eminently favorable as to his natural capacity, his various attainments, and his moral worth. He evinced throughout his brief career an ardent love of literature and science; and, though his circumstances were narrow, he pursued them more with the desire of promoting useful and benevolent designs, than with a view to selfish remuneration. He acquired the rudiments of the Greek, Latin, and German languages, under the direction of the learned Dr. Kunze, at that time connected with the University of Pennsylvania, and was one of his favorite pupils when Dr. Kunze left the city of Philadelphia for New York, in 1784. These languages he acquired with a remarkable facility; they were, however, but auxiliaries to his investigations in almost every branch of human inquiry, to which he seems to have directed his energies. The stock of knowledge, which he thus accumulated, laid a broad foundation for his intended career. His acquaintance with the different branches of physical and mental research now led him to a close study of Medicine, and he was graduated with honor in that profession. His health, however, forbade him more than a very partial exercise of its responsible trusts. Very early thereafter, peculiar opportunities presenting, he ob-

Lane, such accounts against me as they shall present to you for that purpose. I am, my dear friend, yours very affectionately,

B. Franklin.

FROM THE PRINCESS OF DASCHKOFF TO B. FRANKLIN.*

Giving him Notice of his having been chosen a Member of the Imperial Academy of Sciences.

St. Petersburgh, 4 November, 1789.

Dear Sir,

Having always supposed, and even cherished the idea, that you were a member of the Imperial Academy of Sciences, which is at St. Petersburgh under my direction, I was greatly surprised, when, reviewing the list of its members some days ago, I did not find your name in the number. I hastened therefore to acquire this honor for the Academy, and you were received among its members with an unanimous applause and

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tained a situation in one of the public offices of the United States' government; and, deeming Law more available to his new pursuits, he commenced the study of that science with unabated ardor, when he was arrested by a disease of the pulmonary organs, which at an earlier period had given rise to alarming apprehensions among his friends. He died when he had just passed the age of his majority

"The consideration, in which his memory is to be held, arises not alone from his numerous attainments in letters and philosophy. Various contributions to the periodical journals of the time attest at once his powers in his native language, the solidity of his acquisitions, and no mean force of original thinking. The only literary effort by which he will be remembered is his Continuation of the Life of Franklin."

The most important part of Stuber's Continuation is that in which he gives a historical account of Dr. Franklin's discoveries in electricity This has been printed at large in the fifth volume of the present edition.

* This letter was written in English. Dr. Franklin had occasionally met the Princess of Daschkoff at Paris. For several years she held the office of President and Director of the Academy of Sciences at St. Petersburgh.

joy. I beg you, Sir, to accept of this title, and to believe that I look upon it as an honor acquired by our Academy.

I shall order the patent to be despatched to you as soon as possible. In the mean time be assured, that it is with the greatest pleasure that I profit of the present occasion to give you token of my regard and veneration for your eminent character, and that I shall always recollect with pride the advantage I had to be personally noticed by you. With a sincere consideration I am, dear Sir, your most obedient servant,

PRINCESS OF DASCHKOFF.

TO SAMUEL MOORE.

Philadelphia, 5 November, 1789.

DEAR SIR,

I received your favor of July 25th, but had no opportunity of showing any civility to the bearer, whom you mention as coming under the auspices of William Franklin, as he did not show himself to me.

I am obliged by your kind inquiries after my health, which is still tolerably good, the stone excepted; my constitution being such, as, if it were not for that malady, might have held out yet some years longer.

I hope the fire of liberty, which you mention as spreading itself over Europe, will act upon the inestimable rights of man, as common fire does upon gold; purify without destroying them; so that a lover of liberty may find *a country* in any part of Christendom.

I see with pleasure in the public prints, that our Society* is still kept up and flourishes. I was an early member; for, when Mr. Shipley sent me a list

* The London Society for promoting Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce, of which Mr. Moore was Secretary.

of the subscribers, they were but seventy; and, though I had no expectation then of going to England, and acting with them, I sent a contribution of twenty guineas; in consideration of which the Society were afterwards pleased to consider me a member.

I wish to the exertions of your manufacturers, who are generally excellent, and to the spirit and enterprise of your merchants, who are famed for fair and honorable dealing, all the success they merit in promoting the prosperity of your country.

I am glad our friend Small enjoys so much health, and his faculties so perfectly, as I perceive he does by his letters. I know not whether he is yet returned from his visit to Scotland, and therefore give you the trouble of the enclosed. My best wishes attend you, being ever, dear Sir, your most obedient servant,

B. Franklin.

TO ALEXANDER SMALL.

Poor Laws. — American Loyalists. — French and English Governments.

Philadelphia, 5 November, 1789.

Dear Sir,

I received your several favors of April 23d, May 9th, and June 2d, together with the manuscript concerning *Ventilation*,* which will be inserted in our next volume.

I have long been of your opinion, that your legal provision for the poor is a very great evil, operating as it does to the encouragement of idleness. We have followed your example, and begin now to see our error, and, I hope, shall reform it. I find by your letters,

* See Vol. VI. pp. 307 – 324.

that every man has patience enough to bear calmly and coolly the injuries done to other people. You have perfectly forgiven the royalists, and you seem to wonder, that we should still retain any resentment against them for their joining with the savages to burn our houses, and murder and scalp our friends, our wives, and our children. I forget who it was that said, "We are commanded to forgive our enemies, but we are nowhere commanded to forgive our friends." Certain it is, however, that atrocious injuries done to us by our friends are naturally more deeply resented than the same done by enemies. They have left us, to live under the government of their King in England and Nova Scotia. We do not miss them, nor wish their return; nor do we envy them their present happiness.

The accounts you give me of the great prospects you have respecting your manufactures, agriculture, and commerce, are pleasing to me; for I still love England and wish it prosperity. You tell me, that the government of France is abundantly punished for its treachery to England in assisting us. You might also have remarked, that the government of England had been punished for its treachery to France in assisting the Corsicans, and in seizing her ships in time of full peace, without any previous declaration of war. I believe governments are pretty near equal in honesty, and cannot with much propriety praise their own in preference to that of their neighbours.

You do me too much honor in naming me with Timoleon. I am like him only in retiring from my public labors; which indeed my stone, and other infirmities of age, have made indispensably necessary.

I hope you are by this time returned from your visit to your native country, and that the journey has given a firmer consistence to your health. Mr. Penn's prop-

erty in this country, which you inquire about, is still immensely great; and I understand he has received ample compensation in England for the part he lost.

I think you have made a happy choice of rural amusements; the protection of the bees, and the destruction of the hop insect. I wish success to your experiments, and shall be glad to hear the result. Your Theory of Insects appears the most ingenious and plausible of any, that have hitherto been proposed by philosophers.

Our new Constitution is now established with *eleven* States, and the accession of a twelfth is soon expected. We have had one session of Congress under it, which was conducted with remarkable prudence, and a good deal of unanimity. Our late harvests were plentiful, and our produce still fetches a good price, through an abundant foreign demand and the flourishing state of our commerce. I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. Franklin.

TO M. LE ROY.

On the Affairs of France.

Philadelphia, 13 November, 1789.

It is now more than a year, since I have heard from my dear friend Le Roy. What can be the reason? Are you still living? Or have the mob of Paris mistaken the head of a monopolizer of knowledge, for a monopolizer of corn, and paraded it about the streets upon a pole.

Great part of the news we have had from Paris, for near a year past, has been very afflicting. I sincerely wish and pray it may all end well and happy, both

for the King and the nation. The voice of *Philosophy* I apprehend can hardly be heard among those tumults. If any thing material in that way had occurred, I am persuaded you would have acquainted me with it. However, pray let me hear from you a little oftener; for, though the distance is great, and the means of conveying letters not very regular, a year's silence between friends must needs give uneasiness.

Our new Constitution is now established, and has an appearance that promises permanency; but in this world nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes.

My health continues much as it has been for some time, except that I grow thinner and weaker, so that I cannot expect to hold out much longer.

My respects to your good brother, and to our friends of the Academy, which always has my best wishes for its prosperity and glory. Adieu, my dear friend, and believe me ever yours most affectionately,

B. Franklin.

TO DAVID HARTLEY.

Convulsions in France. — Great Britain and the United States.

Philade.phia, 4 December 1789.

My very dear Friend,

I received your favor of August last. Your kind condolences on the painful state of my health are very obliging. I am thankful to God, however, that, among the numerous ills human life is subject to, one only of any importance is fallen to my lot; and that so late as almost to insure that it can be but of short duration.

The convulsions in France are attended with some

disagreeable circumstances; but if by the struggle she obtains and secures for the nation its future liberty, and a good constitution, a few years' enjoyment of those blessings will amply repay all the damages their acquisition may have occasioned. God grant, that not only the love of liberty, but a thorough knowledge of the rights of man, may pervade all the nations of the earth, so that a philosopher may set his foot anywhere on its surface, and say, "This is my country."

Your wishes for a cordial and perpetual friendship between Britain and her ancient colonies are manifested continually in every one of your letters to me; something of my disposition on the same subject may appear to you in casting your eye over the enclosed paper. I do not by this opportunity send you any of our Gazettes, because the postage from Liverpool would be more than they are worth. I can now only add my best wishes of every kind of felicity for the three amiable Hartleys, to whom I have the honor of being an affectionate friend and most obedient humble servant, B. Franklin.

TO MRS. JANE MECOM.

Philadelphia, 17 December, 1789.

Dear Sister,

You tell me you are desired by an acquaintance to ask my opinion, whether the general circumstances mentioned in the history of Baron Trenck are founded in fact; to which I can only answer, that, of the greatest part of those circumstances, the scene being laid in Germany, I must consequently be very ignorant; but of what he says as having passed in France, between the ministers of that country, himself, and me, I can speak positively, that it is *founded in falsehood*, and

that the fact can only serve to confound, as I never saw him in that country, nor ever knew or heard of him anywhere, till I met with the abovementioned history in print, in the German language, in which he ventured to relate it as a fact, that I had, with those ministers, solicited him to enter into the American service. A translation of that book into French has since been printed, but the translator has omitted that pretended fact, probably from an apprehension, that its being in that country known not to be true might hurt the credit and sale of the translation.

I thank you for the sermon on Sacred Music. I have read it with pleasure. I think it a very ingenious composition. You will say this is natural enough, if you read what I have formerly written on the same subject in one of my printed letters, wherein you will find a perfect agreement of sentiment respecting the complex music, of late, in my opinion, too much in vogue; it being only pleasing to learned ears, which can be delighted with the difficulty of execution, instead of harmody and melody.* Your affectionate brother.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO NOAH WEBSTER.

On the English Language. — Improper Use of certain Words in America. — Universality of the French Language. — Improvements in Printing.

Philadelphia, 26 December, 1789.

DEAR SIR,

I received some time since your *Dissertations on the English Language.* The book was not accompanied

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* See Vol. VI. pp. 263, 269.

by any letter or message, informing me to whom I am obliged for it, but I suppose it is to yourself. It is an excellent work, and will be greatly useful in turning the thoughts of our countrymen to correct writing. Please to accept my thanks for the great honor you have done me in its dedication. I ought to have made this acknowledgment sooner, but much indisposition prevented me.

I cannot but applaud your zeal for preserving the purity of our language, both in its expressions and pronunciation, and in correcting the popular errors several of our States are continually falling into with respect to both. Give me leave to mention some of them, though possibly they may have already occurred to you. I wish, however, in some future publication of yours, you would set a discountenancing mark upon them. The first I remember is the word *improved*. When I left New England, in the year 1723, this word had never been used among us, as far as I know, but in the sense of *ameliorated* or made better, except once in a very old book of Dr. Mather's, entitled *Remarkable Providences*. As that eminent man wrote a very obscure hand, I remember that when I read that word in his book, used instead of the word *employed*, I conjectured it was an error of the printer, who had mistaken a too short *l* in the writing for an *r*, and a *y* with too short a tail for a *v*; whereby *employed* was converted into *improved*.

But when I returned to Boston, in 1733, I found this change had obtained favor, and was then become common; for I met with it often in perusing the newspapers, where it frequently made an appearance rather ridiculous. Such, for instance, as the advertisement of a country-house to be sold, which had been many years *improved* as a tavern; and, in the character of a

deceased country gentleman, that he had been for more than thirty years *improved* as a justice of the peace. This use of the word *improved* is peculiar to New England, and not to be met with among any other speakers of English, either on this or the other side of the water.

During my late absence in France, I find that several other new words have been introduced into our parliamentary language; for example, I find a verb formed from the substantive *notice; I should not have* NOTICED *this, were it not that the gentleman,* &c. Also another verb from the substantive *advocate; The gentleman who* ADVOCATES *or has* ADVOCATED *that motion,* &c. Another from the substantive *progress,* the most awkward and abominable of the three; *The committee, having* PROGRESSED, *resolved to adjourn.* The word *opposed,* though not a new word, I find used in a new manner, as, *The gentlemen who are* OPPOSED *to this measure; to which I have also myself always been* OPPOSED. If you should happen to be of my opinion with respect to these innovations, you will use your authority in reprobating them.

The Latin language, long the vehicle used in distributing knowledge among the different nations of Europe, is daily more and more neglected; and one of the modern tongues, viz. the French, seems in point of universality to have supplied its place. It is spoken in all the courts of Europe; and most of the literati, those even who do not speak it, have acquired knowledge enough of it to enable them easily to read the books that are written in it. This gives a considerable advantage to that nation; it enables its authors to inculcate and spread throughout other nations such sentiments and opinions on important points, as are most conducive to its interests, or which may contribute

to its reputation by promoting the common interests of mankind. It is perhaps owing to its being written in French, that Voltaire's treatise on *Toleration* has had so sudden and so great an effect on the bigotry of Europe, as almost entirely to disarm it. The general use of the French language has likewise a very advantageous effect on the profits of the bookselling branch of commerce, it being well known, that the more copies can be sold that are struck off from one composition of types, the profits increase in a much greater proportion than they do in making a great number of pieces in any other kind of manufacture. And at present there is no capital town in Europe without a French bookseller's shop corresponding with Paris.

Our English bids fair to obtain the second place. The great body of excellent printed sermons in our language, and the freedom of our writings on political subjects, have induced a number of divines of different sects and nations, as well as gentlemen concerned in public affairs, to study it; so far at least as to read it. And if we were to endeavour the facilitating its progress, the study of our tongue might become much more general. Those, who have employed some parts of their time in learning a new language, have frequently observed, that, while their acquaintance with it was imperfect, difficulties small in themselves operated as great ones in obstructing their progress. A book, for example, ill printed, or a pronunciation in speaking, not well articulated, would render a sentence unintelligible; which, from a clear print or a distinct speaker, would have been immediately comprehended. If therefore we would have the benefit of seeing our language more generally known among mankind, we should endeavour to remove all the difficulties, however small, that discourage the learning it.

But I am sorry to observe, that, of late years, those difficulties, instead of being diminished, have been augmented. In examining the English books, that were printed between the Restoration and the accession of George the Second, we may observe, that all *substantives* were begun with a capital, in which we imitated our mother tongue, the German. This was more particularly useful to those, who were not well acquainted with the English; there being such a prodigious number of our words, that are both *verbs* and *substantives*, and spelled in the same manner, though often accented differently in the pronunciation.

This method has, by the fancy of printers, of late years been laid aside, from an idea, that suppressing the capitals shows the character to greater advantage; those letters prominent above the line disturbing its even regular appearance. The effect of this change is so considerable, that a learned man of France, who used to read our books, though not perfectly acquainted with our language, in conversation with me on the subject of our authors, attributed the greater obscurity he found in our modern books, compared with those of the period above mentioned, to change of style for the worse in our writers; of which mistake I convinced him, by marking for him each *substantive* with a capital in a paragraph, which he then easily understood, though before he could not comprehend it. This shows the inconvenience of that pretended improvement.

From the same fondness for an even and uniform appearance of characters in the line, the printers have of late banished also the Italic types, in which words of importance to be attended to in the sense of the sentence, and words on which an emphasis should be put in reading, used to be printed. And lately another fancy has induced some printers to use the

short round *s*, instead of the long one, which formerly served well to distinguish a word readily by its varied appearance. Certainly the omitting this prominent letter makes the line appear more even; but renders it less immediately legible; as the paring all men's noses might smooth and level their faces, but would render their physiognomies less distinguishable.

Add to all these improvements *backwards*, another modern fancy, that grey printing is more beautiful than black; hence the English new books are printed in so dim a character, as to be read with difficulty by old eyes, unless in a very strong light and with good glasses. Whoever compares a volume of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, printed between the years 1731 and 1740, with one of those printed in the last ten years, will be convinced of the much greater degree of perspicuity given by black ink than by grey. Lord Chesterfield pleasantly remarked this difference to Faulkener, the printer of the Dublin *Journal*, who was vainly making encomiums on his own paper, as the most complete of any in the world; "But, Mr. Faulkener," said my Lord, "don't you think it might be still farther improved by using paper and ink not quite so near of a color?" For all these reasons I cannot but wish, that our American printers would in their editions avoid these fancied improvements, and thereby render their works more agreeable to foreigners in Europe, to the great advantage of our bookselling commerce.

Further, to be more sensible of the advantage of clear and distinct printing, let us consider the assistance it affords in reading well aloud to an auditory. In so doing the eye generally slides forward three or four words before the voice. If the sight clearly distinguishes what the coming words are, it gives time to order the modulation of the voice to express them

properly. But, if they are obscurely printed, or disguised by omitting the capitals and long *s's* or otherwise, the reader is apt to modulate wrong; and, finding he has done so, he is obliged to go back and begin the sentence again, which lessens the pleasure of the hearers.

This leads me to mention an old error in our mode of printing. We are sensible, that, when a question is met with in reading, there is a proper variation to be used in the management of the voice. We have therefore a point called an interrogation, affixed to the question in order to distinguish it. But this is absurdly placed at its end; so that the reader does not discover it, till he finds he has wrongly modulated his voice, and is therefore obliged to begin again the sentence. To prevent this, the Spanish printers, more sensibly, place an interrogation at the beginning as well as at the end of a question. We have another error of the same kind in printing plays, where something often occurs that is marked as spoken *aside*. But the word *aside* is placed at the end of the speech, when it ought to precede it, as a direction to the reader, that he may govern his voice accordingly. The practice of our ladies in meeting five or six together to form a little busy party, where each is employed in some useful work while one reads to them, is so commendable in itself, that it deserves the attention of authors and printers to make it as pleasing as possible, both to the reader and hearers.

After these general observations, permit me to make one that I imagine may regard your interest. It is that *your Spelling Book* is miserably printed here, so as in many places to be scarcely legible, and on wretched paper. If this is not attended to, and the new one lately advertised as coming out should be preferable in these respects, it may hurt the future sale of yours.

I congratulate you on your marriage, of which the newspapers inform me. My best wishes attend you, being with sincere esteem, Sir, &c.

B. Franklin.

FROM JOHN PAUL JONES TO B. FRANKLIN.

On his leaving the Employment of the Empress of Russia.

Amsterdam, 27 December, 1789.

Dear Sir,

The enclosed documents, from my friend the Count de Ségur, Minister Plenipotentiary of France at St. Petersburg, will explain to you in some degree my reasons for leaving Russia, and the danger to which I was exposed by the dark intrigues and mean subterfuges of Asiatic jealousy and malice. Your former friendship for me, which I remember with particular satisfaction, and have ever been ambitious to merit, will, I am sure, be exerted in the kind use you will make of the three pieces I now send you, for my justification in the eyes of my friends in America, whose good opinion is dearer to me than any thing else. I wrote to the Empress from Warsaw in the beginning of October, with a copy of my Journal, which will show her Majesty how much she has been deceived by the account she had of our maritime operations last campaign. I can easily prove to the world, that I have been treated unjustly; but I intend to remain silent, at least till I know the fate of my Journal.

I shall remain in Europe till after the opening of the next campaign, and perhaps longer before I return to America. From the troubles in Brabant, and the measures now pursuing by the King of Prussia, I presume that peace is yet a distant object, and that the Baltic will witness warmer work than it has yet done.

On the death of Admiral Greig, I was last year called from the Black Sea, by the Empress, to command a squadron in the Baltic. This set the invention of all my enemies and rivals at work, and the event has proved, that the Empress cannot always do as she pleases. I am, with sincere affection, dear Sir, &c.

J. PAUL JONES.

P. S. It is this day ten years since I left the Texel in the *Alliance*.

TO ——.

Construction of the Treaty of Commerce between France and the United States.

Philadelphia, 19 January, 1790.

SIR,

I received the letter you did me the honor of writing to me respecting the construction of the eleventh article of the treaty of commerce between France and the United States. I was indeed one of the Commissioners for making that treaty, but the Commissioners have no right to explain the treaty. Its explanation is to be sought for in its own words, and, in case it cannot be clearly found there, then by an application to the contracting powers.

I certainly conceived, that when the *droit d'aubaine* was relinquished in favor of the citizens of the United States, the relinquishing clause was meant to extend to all the dominions of his most Christian Majesty; and I am of opinion, that this would not be denied, if an explanation were requested of the court of France; and it ought to be done, if any difficulties arise on this subject in the French Islands, which their courts do not determine in our favor. But, before Congress is petitioned to make such request, I imagine it would

be proper to have the case tried in some of the West India islands, and the petition made in consequence of a determination against us. I have the honor to be, &c.

B. Franklin.

FROM EZRA STILES, PRESIDENT OF YALE COLLEGE, TO B. FRANKLIN.

Requesting a Portrait of Dr. Franklin for Yale College. — Inquiry respecting his religious Sentiments.

Yale College, 28 January, 1790.

Sir,

We have lately received Governor Yale's portrait from his family in London, and deposited it in the College Library, where is also deposited one of Governor Saltonstall's. I have also long wished that we might be honored with that of Dr. Franklin. In the course of your long life, you may probably have become possessed of several portraits of yourself. Shall I take too great a liberty in humbly asking a donation of one of them to Yale College? You obliged me with a mezzotinto picture of yourself many years ago, which I often view with pleasure. But the canvass is more permanent. We wish to be possessed of the durable resemblance of the American Patriot and Philosopher. You have merited and received all the honors of the republic of letters; and are going to a world, where all sublunary glories will be lost in the glories of immortality. Should you shine throughout the intellectual and stellary universe, with the eminence and distinguished lustre, with which you have appeared in this little detached part of the creation, you would be, what I most fervently wish to you, Sir, whatever may be my fate in eternity. The grand climacteric, in which

I now am, reminds me of the interesting scenes of futurity.

You know, Sir, that I am a Christian, and would to Heaven all others were such as I am, except my imperfections and deficiencies of moral character. As much as I know of Dr. Franklin, I have not an idea of his religious sentiments. I wish to know the opinion of my venerable friend concerning Jesus of Nazareth. He will not impute this to impertinence or improper curiosity, in one, who for so many years has continued to love, estimate, and reverence his abilities and literary character, with an ardor and affection bordering on adoration. If I have said too much, let the request be blotted out, and be no more; and yet I shall never cease to wish you that happy immortality, which I believe Jesus alone has purchased for the virtuous and truly good of every religious denomination in Christendom, and for those of every age, nation, and mythology, who reverence the Deity, are filled with integrity, righteousness, and benevolence. Wishing you every blessing, I am, dear Sir, your most obedient servant,

EZRA STILES.

TO EZRA STILES.

Consents to have his Portrait taken. — Explains his Sentiments on Religious Subjects.

Philadelphia, 9 March, 1790.

REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,

I received your kind letter of January 28th, and am glad you have at length received the portrait of Governor Yale from his family, and deposited it in the College Library. He was a great and good man, and had the merit of doing infinite service to your country by his munificence to that institution. The honor you

propose doing me by placing mine in the same room with his, is much too great for my deserts; but you always had a partiality for me, and to that it must be ascribed. I am however too much obliged to Yale College, the first learned society that took notice of me and adorned me with its honors, to refuse a request that comes from it through so esteemed a friend. But I do not think any one of the portraits you mention, as in my possession, worthy of the situation and company you propose to place it in. You have an excellent artist lately arrived. If he will undertake to make one for you, I shall cheerfully pay the expense; but he must not delay setting about it, or I may slip through his fingers, for I am now in my eighty-fifth year, and very infirm.

I send with this a very learned work, as it seems to me, on the ancient Samaritan Coins, lately printed in Spain, and at least curious for the beauty of the impression. Please to accept it for your College Library. I have subscribed for the Encyclopædia now printing here, with the intention of presenting it to the College. I shall probably depart before the work is finished, but shall leave directions for its continuance to the end. With this you will receive some of the first numbers.

You desire to know something of my religion. It is the first time I have been questioned upon it. But I cannot take your curiosity amiss, and shall endeavour in a few words to gratify it. Here is my creed. I believe in one God, the creator of the universe. That he governs it by his Providence. That he ought to be worshipped. That the most acceptable service we render to him is doing good to his other children. That the soul of man is immortal, and will be treated with justice in another life respecting its conduct in this. These I take to be the fundamental points in all sound

religion, and I regard them as you do in whatever sect I meet with them.

As to Jesus of Nazareth, my opinion of whom you particularly desire, I think his system of morals and his religion, as he left them to us, the best the world ever saw or is like to see; but I apprehend it has received various corrupting changes, and I have, with most of the present Dissenters in England, some doubts as to his Divinity; though it is a question I do not dogmatize upon, having never studied it, and think it needless to busy myself with it now, when I expect soon an opportunity of knowing the truth with less trouble. I see no harm, however, in its being believed, if that belief has the good consequence, as probably it has, of making his doctrines more respected and more observed; especially as I do not perceive, that the Supreme takes it amiss, by distinguishing the unbelievers in his government of the world with any peculiar marks of his displeasure.

I shall only add, respecting myself, that, having experienced the goodness of that Being in conducting me prosperously through a long life, I have no doubt of its continuance in the next, though without the smallest conceit of meriting such goodness. My sentiments on this head you will see in the copy of an old letter enclosed,* which I wrote in answer to one from an old religionist, whom I had relieved in a paralytic case by electricity, and who, being afraid I should grow proud upon it, sent me his serious though rather impertinent caution. I send you also the copy of another letter,† which will show something of my dispo-

* Probably the letter said to have been written to Whitefield. See Vol. VII. p. 74.

† It is uncertain what letter is here alluded to, but probably the one supposed to have been written to Thomas Paine. See above, p. 281 See also Vol. VII. pp. 6, 8, 113, 261, 267.

sition relating to religion. With great and sincere esteem and affection, I am, &c.

B. Franklin.

P. S. Had not your College some present of books from the King of France? Please to let me know, if you had an expectation given you of more, and the nature of that expectation? I have a reason for the inquiry.

I confide, that you will not expose me to criticisms and censures by publishing any part of this communication to you. I have ever let others enjoy their religious sentiments, without reflecting on them for those that appeared to me unsupportable or even absurd. All sects here, and we have a great variety, have experienced my good will in assisting them with subscriptions for the building their new places of worship; and, as I have never opposed any of their doctrines, I hope to go out of the world in peace with them all.

TO MRS. JANE MECOM.

Philadelphia, 24 March, 1790.

My dear Sister,

I received your kind letter by your good neighbour, Captain Rich. The information it contained, that you continue well, gave me, as usual, great pleasure. As to myself, I have been quite free from pain for near three weeks past; and therefore not being obliged to take any laudanum, my appetite has returned, and I have recovered some part of my strength. Thus I continue to live on, while all the friends of my youth have left me, and gone to join the majority. I have, however, the pleasure of continued friendship and con-

versation with their children and grandchildren. I do not repine at my malady, though a severe one, when I consider how well I am provided with every convenience to palliate it, and to make me comfortable under it; and how many more horrible evils the human body is subject to; and what a long life of health I have been blessed with, free from them all.

You have done well not to send me any more fish at present. These continue good, and give me pleasure.

Do you know any thing of our sister Scott's daughter; whether she is still living, and where? This family join in love to you and yours, and to cousins Williams, with your affectionate brother,

B. Franklin.

P. S. It is early in the morning, and I write in bed. The awkward position has occasioned the crooked lines.

SUPPLEMENT.

THE letters in the following SUPPLEMENT were obtained too late to be inserted in the order of their dates. Those addressed to CHARLES THOMSON have been obligingly communicated by Mr. William B. Reed, of Philadelphia, who received the originals from Mr. John Thomson, of Newark, Delaware. They have never before been printed. The letter to JANE MECOM, near the end of the SUPPLEMENT, has recently been published for the first time in the New York "*Evening Signal.*"

SUPPLEMENT.

TO CHARLES THOMSON.

Proprietary Government in Philadelphia. — Stamp Act.

London, 11 July, 1765.

DEAR FRIEND,

I am extremely obliged by your kind letters of April 12th and 14th, and thank you for the intelligence they contain. The outrages continually committed by those misguided people, will doubtless tend to convince all the considerate on your side of the water, of the weakness of our present government, and the necessity of a change. I am sure it will contribute towards hastening that change here, so that, upon the whole, good will be brought out of evil; and yet I grieve to hear of such horrid disorders. The letters and accounts boasted of from the Proprietor, of his being sure of his retaining the government, as well as those of the sums offered for it, which the people will be obliged to pay, &c., are all idle tales, fit only for knaves to propagate, and fools to believe. A little time will dissipate all the smoke they can raise to conceal the real state of things.

The unsettled state of the ministry, ever since the Parliament rose, has stopped all proceeding in public affairs, and ours amongst the rest; but, change being now made, we shall immediately proceed, and with a greater cheerfulness, as some we had reason to doubt of are removed, and some particular friends are put in place. What you mentioned of the Lower Counties is

undoubtedly right. Had they ever sent their laws home,* as they ought to have done, that iniquitous one of priority of payment to residents would undoubtedly have been repealed. But the end of all these things is nigh; at least, it seems to be so.

The spiking of the guns was an audacious piece of villany, by whomsoever done. It shows the necessity of a regular enclosed place of defence, with a constant guard to take care of what belongs to it, which, when the country can afford it, will, I hope, be provided.

Depend upon it, my good neighbour, I took every step in my power to prevent the passing of the Stamp Act. Nobody could be more concerned and interested than myself, to oppose it sincerely and heartily. But the tide was too strong against us. The nation was provoked by American claims of independence,† and all parties joined in resolving by this act to settle the point. We might as well have hindered the sun's setting. That we could not do. But since it is down, my friend, and it may be long before it rises again, let us make as good a night of it as we can. We may still light candles. Frugality and industry will go a great way towards indemnifying us. Idleness and pride tax with a heavier hand than kings and parliaments. If we can get rid of the former, we may easily get rid of the latter.

My best respects to Mrs. Thomson. Adieu, my dear friend, and believe me ever yours affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

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* By *home* here is meant England, a common use of the word before the Revolution.

† Claims to an independence of Parliament, in regard to the power of taxing the colonists without their consent.

TO CHARLES THOMSON.

Expected Repeal of the Stamp Act.

London, 27 February, 1766

MY GOOD FRIEND AND NEIGHBOUR,

I forgot whether I before acknowledged the receipt of your kind letter of September 24th. I gave an extract from it to a friend, with an extract from mine to which it was an answer, and he printed both in the *London Chronicle*, with an introduction of his own; and I have reprinted every thing from America, that I thought might help our common cause.

We at length, after a long and hard struggle, have gained so much ground, that there is now little doubt the Stamp Act will be repealed, and reasonable relief given us besides, in our commercial grievances, and those relating to our currency.* I trust the behaviour of the Americans on the occasion will be so prudent, decent, and grateful, as that their friends here will have no reason to be ashamed, and that our enemies, who predict that the indulgence of Parliament will only make us more insolent and ungovernable, may find themselves, and be found, false prophets.

My respects to Mrs. Thomson. I have not had the pleasure of hearing from you by any of the late opportunities, but am so bad a correspondent myself, that I have no right to take exceptions, and am, nevertheless, your affectionate friend and very humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

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* It was but a few days before writing this letter, that Dr. Franklin was examined in Parliament concerning the Stamp Act. See Vol. IV. p. 161.

TO CHARLES THOMSON.

Repeal of the Stamp Act.

London, 27 September, 1766.

DEAR FRIEND AND NEIGHBOUR,

I received your very kind letter of May 20th, which came here while I was absent in Germany.* The favorable sentiments you express of my conduct, with regard to the repeal of the Stamp Act, give me real pleasure; and I hope, in every other matter of public concern, so to behave myself as to stand fair in the opinion of the wise and good, and what the rest think and say of me will then give me less concern.

That part of your letter, which relates to the situation of people's minds in America before and after the repeal, was so well expressed, and in my opinion so proper to be generally read and understood here, that I had it printed in the *London Chronicle.* I had the pleasure to find, that it did good in several instances within my knowledge.

There are claimers enough of merit in obtaining the repeal. But, if I live to see you, I will let you know what an escape we had in the beginning of the affair, and how much we were obliged to what the profane would call *luck*, and the pious, *Providence.*

You will give an old man leave to say, "My love to Mrs. Thomson." With sincere regard, I am your affectionate friend, B. FRANKLIN.

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* He had recently made a tour through Holland and various parts of Germany, in company with his friend Sir John Pringle.

TO M. LE ROY.

Authorship of the "Farmer's Letters." — Commercial Resolutions in America. — Political Errors.

London, 31 January, 1769.

Dear Sir,

I received your obliging favor of November 15th. I presented your compliments to Sir John Pringle, who was glad with me to hear of your welfare, and desired me to offer his best respects whenever I wrote to you. The *Farmer's Letters* were written by one Mr. Dickinson, of Philadelphia, and not by me, as you seem to suppose. I only caused them to be reprinted here with that little Preface, and had no other hand in them, except that I see some of my sentiments formerly published are collected, and interwoven with those of others and his own, by the author. I am glad they afforded you any amusement. It is true, as you have heard, that troops are posted in Boston, on the pretence of preventing riots and protecting the custom-house officers; but it is also true, that there was no intention among the people there, to oppose the landing of those troops, or to resist the execution of the law by arms. The riots talked of were sudden, unpremeditated things, that happened only among a few of the lower sort. Their plan of making war on this country is of a different kind. It is to be a war on commerce only, and consists in an absolute determination to buy and use no more of the manufactures of Britain, till the act is repealed. This is already agreed to by four provinces, and will be by all the rest in the ensuing summer. Eleven ships now here from Boston and New York, which would have carried, one with another, fifty thousand pounds ster-

ling each in goods, are going away in their ballast, as the Parliament seems determined not to repeal. I am inclined to think, however, that it will alter its mind before the end of the session. Otherwise it is to be feared the breach will grow wider by successive indiscretions on both sides.

The subject you propose to me, the consequences of allowing a free exportation of corn, the advantages or disadvantages of the *Concurrence*, &c., is a very extensive one; and I have been, and am at present, so much occupied with our American affairs, as that, if I were ever so capable of handling it, I have not time to engage in it at present to any purpose. I think, however, with you, that the true principles of commerce are yet but little understood, and that most of the acts of Parliament, *arrêts* and edicts of princes and states, relating to commerce, are political errors, solicited and obtained by particulars for private interest, under the pretext of public good.

The bearer of this, Captain Overy, is a particular friend of mine, who now only passes through Paris for Lyons and Nice, but in his return may stay in your city some time. He is a gentleman of excellent character and great merit, and as such I beg leave to recommend him to your civilities and advice, which may be of great service to him, as he is quite a stranger in Paris. With the greatest esteem and respect, I am, dear Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. Your English is extremely good; but, if it is more easy for you to write in French, do not give yourself the trouble of writing in English, as I understand your French perfectly well.

TO CHARLES THOMSON.*

Petition of the First Congress presented to the King and Parliament. — Manner in which it was received. — Lord Camden. — Lord Chatham's Speech and Plan of Conciliation.

London, 5 February, 1775.

Dear Sir,

I received duly your favors of November 1st, by Captain Falconer, and afterwards that of October 26th, both enclosing the letter from the Congress, and the petition to the King. Immediately on the receipt of the first, I wrote to every one of the other gentlemen nominated, and desired a meeting to consult on the mode of presenting the petition committed to our care. Three of them, viz. Mr. Burke,† Mr. Wentworth, and Mr. Life, declined being concerned in it, and, without consulting each other, gave the same reason, viz. that they had no instructions relating to it. It rested on Mr. Bollan, Mr. Lee, and myself. We took counsel with our best friends, and were advised to present it through Lord Dartmouth, that being the regular official method, and the only one in which we might on occasion call for an answer. ‡

We accordingly waited on his Lordship with it, who would not immediately undertake to deliver it, but requested it might be left with him to peruse, which was done. He found nothing in it improper for him

* This letter was written to Mr. Thomson as Secretary of Congress.

† Mr. Burke was at this time agent for New York, in which capacity he had acted for several years.

‡ It was resolved in Congress, October 25th, 1774, "That the Address to the King be enclosed in a letter to the several colony agents, in order that the same may be by them presented to his Majesty; and that the agents be requested to call in the aid of such noblemen and gentlemen as are esteemed firm friends to American liberty."

to present, and, afterwards sending for us, he informed us, that he had presented the petition to his Majesty, who had been pleased to receive it very graciously, and to command him to tell us it contained matters of such importance, that, as soon as they met, he would lay it before his two Houses of Parliament.

We then consulted on the publication, and were advised by wise and able men, friends of America, whose names it will not be proper to mention, by no means to publish it till it should be before Parliament, as it would be deemed disrespectful to the King. We flattered ourselves, from the answer given by Lord Dartmouth, that the King would have been pleased to recommend it to the consideration of Parliament by some message; but we were mistaken. It came down among a great heap of letters of intelligence from governors and officers in America, newspapers, pamphlets, handbills, &c., from that country, the last in the list, and was laid upon the table with them, undistinguished by any particular recommendation of it to the notice of either House; and I do not find, that it has had any further notice taken of it as yet, than that it has been read as well as the other papers.

To draw it into the attention of the House, we petitioned to be heard upon it, but were not permitted; and, by the resolutions of the committee of the whole House, which I enclose, you will see that it has made little impression; and, from the constant refusal, neglect, or discouragement of American petitions, these many years past, our country will at least be convinced, that petitions are odious here, and that petitioning is far from being a probable means of obtaining redress. A firm, steady, and faithful adherence to the non-consumption agreement, is the only thing to be depended on. It begins already to work, (as you will see in the

votes of the House), by producing applications from the merchants and manufacturers, and it must finally lead Parliament into reasonable measures.

At present, the ministers are encouraged to proceed by the assurance they receive from America, that the people are not unanimous; that a very great part of them disapprove the proceedings of the Congress, and would break through them, if there was in the country an army sufficient to support these friends, as they are called, of government. They rely, too, on being able to divide us still further by various means; for they seem to have no conception, that such a thing as public spirit or public virtue anywhere exists. I trust they will find themselves totally mistaken. The Congress is in high esteem here among all the friends of liberty, and their papers much admired; perhaps nothing of the kind has been more thoroughly published, or more universally read. Lord Camden spoke highly of the Americans in general, and of the Congress particularly, in the House of Lords. Lord Chatham said, that, taking the whole together, and considering the members of the Congress as the unsolicited, unbeseeched choice of a great, free, and enlightened people; their unanimity, their moderation, and their wisdom; he thought it the most honorable assembly of men, that had ever been known; that the histories of Greece and Rome gave us nothing equal to it. Lord Shelburne would not admit, that the Parliament of Britain could be comparable with it, a Parliament obeying the dictates of a ministry, who, in nine cases out of ten, were governed by their under secretaries.

You will see, among the papers herewith sent, the motion made by Lord Chatham, as preparatory to his plan, viz. that the troops should be removed from Boston. I send, also, a copy of the plan itself, which

you may be assured is genuine. The speeches hitherto published as his, during the session, are spurious. The Duke of Richmond and the Duke of Manchester appeared for us also in the debate, and spoke extremely well. Lord Chatham's bill, though on so important a subject, and offered by so great a character, and supported by such able and learned speakers as Camden, &c. &c., was treated with as much contempt as they could have shown to a ballad offered by a drunken porter. It was rejected on a slight reading, without being suffered even to lie on the table for the perusal of the members.

The House of Commons, too, have shown an equal rashness and precipitation in matters requiring the most weighty deliberation, refusing to hear, and entering hastily into violent measures; and yet this is the government, whose supreme authority, we are to have our throats cut, if we do not acknowledge, and whose dictates we are implicitly to obey, while their conduct hardly entitles them to common respect.

The agents have not time to make so many copies of the papers sent with this, and, indeed, of our letter to the Speakers of the several Assemblies, as would be necessary, to send one for each; we therefore send only two, one by Falconer, and the other by Lawrence to New York, requesting, that you will get them copied at Philadelphia, and forward them northward and southward, one to each Speaker, at the earliest conveyance. It is thought by our friends, that Lord Chatham's plan, if it had been enacted here, would have prevented present mischief, and might have been the foundation of a lasting good agreement; for, though in some points it might not perfectly coincide with our ideas and wishes, we should have proposed modifications or variations where we should judge them necessary;

in fine, the two countries might have met in perfect union. I hope, therefore, it will be treated with respect by our writers, and its author honored for the attempt; for, though he has put some particulars into it, as I think, by way of complying a little with the general prejudices here, and to make more material parts go better down, yet I am persuaded he would not otherwise be tenacious of those parts, meaning sincerely to make us contented and happy, as far as consistent with the general welfare.

I need not caution you to let no part of this letter be copied or printed. With great esteem, I am, Sir, your affectionate friend and humble servant.*

TO CHARLES THOMSON.

Concerning the Ratification of the Treaty of Peace.

Passy, 31 March, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

I write this line by the English packet, just to inform you, that Colonel Harmar arrived here last Monday evening with the ratification, and that Mr. Jay and myself (Messrs. Adams and Laurens being absent) have written to Mr. Hartley at London, that we are ready to exchange with him. I have not heard that the delay is likely to occasion any difficulty. I had before communicated to him your letter of the 5th of January, which gave the reason of it. With great esteem, I am B. FRANKLIN.

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* The writer's signature is not affixed to the original letter

TO CHARLES THOMSON.

Treaty of Peace. — British Ministry. — Public Funds. — French Alliance. — Treaties with Foreign Powers.

Passy, 16 April, 1784.

DEAR FRIEND,

I received your kind letter by Colonel Harmar, and Lieutenant-Colonel Franks, with the despatches, in good order; triplicates of which are since come to hand. You will see by our letter to the President, that we daily expect Mr. Hartley from London, with the British ratification to exchange with us. There was no difficulty occasioned by the lapse of the term.

I send you, herewith, four packets of newspapers, by which you will be informed of the confusions that have reigned all winter in England, and the probability of their being finished by the choice of a new Parliament, in which the present ministry will have a great majority. The newspapers are directed for the President. You are good in excusing the trouble I have given you with so many little affairs and inquiries, and enabling me to give some answer to the persons who make them. I am pestered continually with such matters.

I am happy in learning from you, that a disposition begins to prevail in the States, to comply with the requisitions of Congress, and to grant funds for the regular payment of the interest, and discharge of the principal, of the debts contracted by the war. Punctuality and exact justice will contribute more to our reputation, and, of course, to our strength, than people generally imagine. Without those virtues, we shall find it difficult, in case of another war, to obtain either friends or money; and a reliance on that may encourage and hasten another attack upon us. Grati-

tude to our former benefactors is another point we should seize every opportunity of demonstrating. I place, with you, much confidence in the good sense of our countrymen; and thence I hope, that the endeavours of some persons on both sides of the water, to sow jealousies and suspicions, and create misunderstandings between France and us, will be ineffectual.

A commission from Congress for a commercial treaty with Britain has long been expected. If the intention of sending such a commissioner is not changed, I wish it may arrive before Mr. Laurens leaves us, who has a more perfect knowledge of the subject than any of us, and might be greatly useful. A minister from Denmark has been waiting in Paris all winter for the result of Congress on the proposed treaty, a plan of which was long since sent, as also one for a treaty with Portugal. I hope, by the return of the *Washington* packet, we may receive some directions respecting them. I am, with sincere and great esteem, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. Franklin.

TO CHARLES THOMSON.

Projects and Plans by Persons in Europe for the Consideration of Congress. — King of Sweden.

Passy, 14 June, 1784.

Dear Sir

I received yours of April 19th, with the information you obtained from our old neighbour, Reuben Haines, respecting Marggrander, for which I thank you. I am much pestered with applications to make such inquiries, and often obliged to promise that I will transmit them; but I would not wish you to take more trouble, than to ask questions of the members of Con-

gress, or others that fall in your way, and communicate to me their answers, if of any importance. I have also multitudes of projects sent to me, with requests that I would lay them before Congress. They are plans and schemes of governments, legislation, education, defence, manufactures, commerce, &c., formed by people who have great good will to us, but are totally ignorant of our affairs and circumstances; whence their projects are, for the most part, wild and impracticable, or unfit to be presented to Congress, as not pertaining to their jurisdiction. I have therefore not forwarded them; but now and then send some of them for your amusement, if you should have any leisure, that you may see how people make shoes for feet they have never measured.

As your letter mentions nothing of public affairs, I imagined I might have had, by the same conveyance, some despatches from Congress, perhaps in the care of some passenger; but a fortnight has passed since the arrival of the packet-boat, and no letters appear; so that I have nothing from Congress later than the 14th of January, and continue in great uncertainty as to my return.

Mr. Norris came here, after residing some time at Liege. He stayed but a week or two at Paris, and then removed to a country town not far distant, where nothing but French is spoken, in order to improve himself in that language. He seems a sensible, discreet young man, and I shall with pleasure render him any service that may be in my power.

The King of Sweden is now at this court, enjoying the various splendid entertainments provided for him. The Danish minister is astonished, that the Congress are so long without taking any notice of the proposed

treaty. With great esteem, I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

TO CHARLES THOMSON.*

Respecting a Million of Livres in the Account of the American Banker in France.

Philadelphia, 18 June, 1786.

DEAR SIR,

I received in its time your favor of the 15th past, with an extract from the contract made at Versailles, February 21st, 1783. This extract being a translation, I have spent some time in searching for a copy. I supposed I might have the original, but have not yet met with it, and will now no longer delay my answer, which is, that, if the translation be just, and the original really mentions three millions, as given before the treaty of 1778, it has either been a mistake of one million, or the million received from the Farmers-General is included, as a *don gratuit* of the King; in which latter case, as you observe, they owe us for the tobacco received, in part. For I think it a certainty, that no money was received from the crown, which did not go directly into the hands of Mr. Grand; and, though he accounts for three millions received before 1778, one of them is the million received of the Farmers-General.

An explanation and adjustment of this matter may, I make no doubt, be easily obtained by writing to Mr. Grand and Mr. Jefferson. There can be no error of that magnitude in Mr. Grand's accounts, for they were rendered to the Commissioners from time to time, and settled while all the transactions were fresh

* A further explanation of the subject of this letter may be seen in this volume, pp. 265, 269 - 272, 285.

in memory. And I am persuaded, the minister will very readily either correct the error in the contract, or direct our demanding of the Farmers the value of the tobacco, as the case may be. With great and sincere esteem, I have the honor to be, Sir, &c.

B. Franklin.

TO MRS. JANE MECOM.

Attendance in the Convention. — Disapprobation of War. — Precautions for protecting Houses from Fire.

Philadelphia, 20 September, 1787.

Dear Sister,

I received your kind letter of the 16th past, which gave me the great pleasure of learning that you were well. I thought I had before acknowledged the receipt of yours per Colonel Sergeant.

The Convention finished the 17th instant. I attended the business of it five hours in every day from the beginning, which is something more than four months. You may judge from thence, that my health continues; some tell me I look better, and they suppose the daily exercise of going and returning from the Statehouse has done me good. You will see the Constitution we have proposed in the papers. The forming of it so as to accommodate all the different interests and views was a difficult task; and perhaps, after all, it may not be received with the same unanimity in the different States, that the Convention have given the example of in delivering it out for their consideration. We have, however, done our best, and it must take its chance.

I agree with you perfectly in your disapprobation of war. Abstracted from the inhumanity of it, I think it wrong in point of human prudence; for, whatever advantage one nation would obtain from another, wheth-

er it be part of their territory, the liberty of commerce with them, free passage on their rivers, &c. &c., it would be much cheaper to purchase such advantage with ready money than to pay the expense of acquiring it by war. An army is a devouring monster, and, when you have raised it, you have, in order to subsist it, not only the fair charges of pay, clothing, provisions, arms, and ammunition, with numberless other contingent and just charges to answer and satisfy, but you have all the additional knavish charges of the numerous tribe of contractors to defray, with those of every other dealer who furnishes the articles wanted for your army, and takes advantage of that want to demand exorbitant prices. It seems to me, that, if statesmen had a little more arithmetic, or were more accustomed to calculation, wars would be much less frequent. I am confident, that Canada might have been purchased from France for a tenth part of the money England spent in the conquest of it. And if, instead of fighting with us for the power of taxing us, she had kept us in good humor by allowing us to dispose of our own money, and now and then giving us a little of hers, by way of donation to colleges, or hospitals, or for cutting canals, or fortifying ports, she might have easily drawn from us much more by our occasional voluntary grants and contributions, than ever she could by taxes. Sensible people will give a bucket or two of water to a dry pump, that they may afterwards get from it all they have occasion for. Her ministry were deficient in that little point of common sense. And so they spent one hundred millions of her money, and after all lost what they contended for.

I lament the loss your town has suffered this year by fire. I sometimes think men do not act like rea-

sonable creatures, when they build for themselves combustible dwellings, in which they are every day obliged to use fire. In my new buildings, I have taken a few precautions, not generally used; to wit, none of the wooden work of one room communicates with the wooden work of any other room; and all the floors, and even the steps of the stairs, are plastered close to the boards, besides the plastering on the laths under the joists. There are also trap-doors to go out upon the roofs, that one may go out and wet the shingles in case of a neighbouring fire. But, indeed, I think the staircases should be stone, and the floors tiled as in Paris, and the roofs either tiled or slated.

I am much obliged to your friend and neighbour Mr. Lathrop, for his kind present, and purpose writing to him. It is a discourse well written.

I sent you lately a barrel of flour, and I blame myself for not sooner desiring you to lay in your winter's wood, and drawing upon me for it as last year. But I have been so busy. To avoid such neglect in future, I now make the direction general, that you draw on me every year for the same purpose.

Adieu, my dear sister, and believe me ever your affectionate brother, B. FRANKLIN.

TO M. DUBOURG.*

On the Nature of Sea Coal.

——I am persuaded, as well as you, that the sea coal has a vegetable origin, and that it has been formed

* This extract is translated from the French, as printed in M. Dubourg's edition of the author's writings. Its date is uncertain, but it was probably written about the year 1770, and should have been inserted among the philosophical papers of that period.

near the surface of the earth; but, as preceding convulsions of nature had served to bring it very deep in many places, and covered it with many different strata, we are indebted to subsequent convulsions for having brought within our view the extremities of its veins, so as to lead us to penetrate the earth in search of it. I visited last summer a large coal mine at Whitehaven, in Cumberland; and, in following the vein and descending by degrees towards the sea, I penetrated below the ocean, where the level of its surface was more than eight hundred fathoms above my head, and the miners assured me, that their works extended some miles beyond the place where I then was, continually and gradually descending under the sea. The slate, which forms the roof of this coal mine, is impressed in many places with the figures of leaves and branches of fern, which undoubtedly grew at the surface when the slate was in the state of sand on the banks of the sea. Thus it appears, that this vein of coal has suffered a prodigious settlement.——

B. Franklin.

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON.

Concerning the Eastern Boundary of the United States.

Philadelphia, 8 April, 1790.*

Sir,

I received your letter of the 31st of last past, relating to encroachments made on the eastern limits of the United States by settlers under the British government, pretending that it is the *western*, and not the *eastern* river of the Bay of Passamaquoddy which was designated by the name of St. Croix, in the

* This letter is dated only nine days before Dr. Franklin's death.

treaty of peace with that nation; and requesting of me to communicate any facts which my memory or papers may enable me to recollect, and which may indicate the true river, which the commissioners on both sides had in their view, to establish as the boundary between the two nations.

Your letter found me under a severe fit of my malady, which prevented my answering it sooner, or attending, indeed, to any kind of business. I now can assure you, that I am perfectly clear in the remembrance that the map we used in tracing the boundary, was brought to the treaty by the commissioners from England, and that it was the same that was published by Mitchell above twenty years before. Having a copy of that map by me in loose sheets, I send you that sheet which contains the Bay of Passamaquoddy, where you will see that part of the boundary traced. I remember, too, that in that part of the boundary we relied much on the opinion of Mr. Adams, who had been concerned in some former disputes concerning those territories. I think, therefore, that you may obtain still further light from him.

That the map we used was Mitchell's map, Congress were acquainted at the time, by a letter to their Secretary for Foreign Affairs, which I suppose may be found upon their files. I have the honor to be, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

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